The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

THOMAS J. DUNNIGAN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
Initial interview date: September 7, 1990

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Secretariat 1957-1960
- Secretary Dulles
- Dean Rusk
- World priorities
- Chester Bowles

National War College 1961-1962

Bonn, West Germany 1962-1965
- Political-Military affairs
- NATO and multilateral force issue
- Soviet threat
- De Gaulle vetoes Britain's entry to EC
- Ambassador George McGee
- Working with the Germans

Junior Officer Program 1965-1969
- Rotational program

The Hague, Netherlands 1969-1972
- Political Counselor
- Ambassador Middendorf
- NATO issues
- Leftwing PROVOs
- Vietnam issue

Copenhagen, Denmark 1972-1975
- Relations with the Danes
- Denmark and NATO
- Ambassador Russell
- Ambassador Crowe

Tel Aviv, Israel 1975-1977
- Deputy Chief of Mission
- Ambassador Malcolm Toon
- Kissinger shuttle missions
- Secretary Vance's missions
- Working with the Israelis
- West Bank settlements
- Consulate General in Jerusalem
- Protecting Arab-American citizens
- US visiting delegations
- Prime Minister Begin
- Pressure on Jewish staff members
- Hebrew language

Center College, Kentucky 1977-1978
Diplomat in Residence
Student attitude toward Vietnam and elsewhere

The Hague, Netherlands 1978-1981
Deputy Chief of Mission
Ambassador Geri Joseph
Embassy operations
Ground-launched cruise missiles issue
Local environment
Attitude toward US
Dutch "excessive" tolerance
Dutch investments in US
Neutron bomb issue

OAS 1981
Political issues
Ambassador Middendorf

INTERVIEW

Q: Tom and I are old friends, going back many years. Tom, I wonder if you could give me an idea of your background; where you came from before you got into this peculiar trade of foreign affairs?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I was born and raised in Ohio, Stu, and went to college at John Carroll University, a small school in Cleveland--not so small now, it was small then when I went. And immediately upon graduation, which was during World War II, I went into the Army. While I was serving in the Army...

Q: What were you doing in the Army?

DUNNIGAN: I was running a food supply unit for a replacement battalion of about a thousand men in France during most of the war.

Q: A repo-depot, as they called it.

DUNNIGAN: I was in the 16th Repo-depot, I remember it well. Toward end of the war I was still in France, and it must have been in the early summer of '45, an announcement appeared in the *Stars and Stripes* that a Foreign Service exam would be given for the first time since 1941, and that members of the armed forces were eligible to take it if they had certain credentials: American citizenship of twenty-one years, college graduate and so

forth. But they also had to have their company commander's permission and so forth. Well, I thought this would be very interesting since I'd majored in history in college, and I applied. And lo and behold, I was approved to take the exam, and took it with several thousand others in the fall of '45, in Oberammergau, Germany, inside a huge mountain that had been carved out as the Messerschmitt fighter plane plant but was perfectly suited to give Foreign Service exams to several thousand students.

Having taken that, I was discharged from the Army about six months later, returned to Ohio, and received notice that I should report to Chicago for an oral examination. I reported to Chicago and took the oral examination sometime in May of '46, before a board, one of whose members was a serving general in the Army. Another public member I recall was from the Department of Agriculture. There were several retired Foreign Service types, including an ambassador. I was told at the conclusion of that day that I had passed the exam. I thanked the chairman and then asked him how long would it be before I was called to duty, because I had been accepted at Harvard graduate school and I wanted to continue my studies for a while. He said, "No fear, it'll be at least two years. We're backed-up with candidates."

This was my first experience with government. Because I'd been at Harvard about six weeks and I received a telegram to report within three weeks to Washington to begin my Foreign Service career.

So that was, roughly, my background.

Q: Did you have what amounted to an entering class?

DUNNIGAN: We did.

Q: Could you describe a bit who these were and what kind of training you had?

DUNNIGAN: Classes were entering during that summer of 1946, because the service was trying to expand rapidly, every two weeks.

Q: Good God!

DUNNIGAN: We were given a six-weeks training, but the classes kept rolling. My class entered the 30th of July in '46, and we were fifteen students, all of whom, with one exception, had been in the armed forces. The one exception was a woman who had been in the Foreign Service, Kay Bracken, and she went through with our class. The others, all of whom are now of course retired and some of whom are dead, were people with whom one kept in touch over the years and so forth, and I see them very occasionally.

Q: Well, could you give a little idea of how you and maybe your colleagues viewed what you were going to do in the world, and the United States' position in it?

DUNNIGAN: I think few of us had much of an idea at that time. Perhaps some did who had majored in international relations and had looked forward to a Foreign Service career, but most of us hadn't. We were very interested in finding out what we were going to be doing.

The training in those days left, to put it charitably, a great deal to be desired. I remember we had one solid week, in the afternoons, of lectures by an old civil servant from the Visa Office about visas. And I remember remarking to one of my colleagues at the end of one of those lectures that I wasn't sure this was a career I was interested in. Because the entire lecture was filled with "Thou shalt not," and "If you make a mistake, the government will never forgive you," and "That money's entrusted to you, and the GAO will pursue you to the end of the world to get you if you misappropriate fifteen dollars, or miscertify it, or whatever." There was a great deal of that at the time. We then had several lengthy lectures about protocol and how to behave and how to drop cards and the usual sort of thing. Nothing, that I recall, whatsoever about political or economic reporting. It was geared almost entirely to consular and to administrative work, it seemed to me at the time.

Interestingly enough, the Foreign Service Institute was then located in Lothrop House, where Connecticut and Columbia Roads come together, which is now, I'm told, the Russian Purchasing Mission. But we sat there in air-conditioned splendor during that summer of '46, absorbing all this.

Assignments were given out toward the end of the course, and we scattered from Berlin to Shanghai, Saigon, and other places like that.

Q: You were in Berlin from '46 to 1950. What were you doing there?

DUNNIGAN: I did many things. There was no administrative officer in those days at post, at least not in Berlin. I was assigned to the Office of the United States Political Advisor, Robert Murphy, which was our State Department presence. There was a very large office, larger than most embassies. The administrative work, including supervision of the personnel, was done by the political counselor, Warren Chase, in his off hours. He did have a personnel staff of three young ladies under him, but he made all the big decisions. And I was assigned there fully expecting to be a consular officer and apply what little I remembered about visa lore and the Act of 1921 to applicants.

But I'd been there about a week, and Mr. Chase called me to his office one night and he said, "Dunnigan, it says here you're supposed to go over and work in the consular unit."

And I said, "Yes."

And he said, "Well, we've just sent a vice counselor over there about a month ago. They don't need any more help. You stay here."

Young and pliable, I said, "Yes sir. What shall I do?"

Well, he said, "You know, this office has been established now for over two years. It was founded in London by Mr. Murphy back in '44, and it's accumulated a great deal of history in its files. Now those files need clearing out. I want you to start weeding them out."

This sounded like a thankless task, but actually it proved to be a boon to me because I was able to read through the old files and find out the whole history of the Office of the Political Advisor's relationship to the military, and read fascinating reports about our officers who'd been into concentration camps immediately upon their liberation, and relations with the Russians in the early days and so forth, which gave me a tremendous background to be in Berlin.

Well, after six weeks or so of that, perhaps a little longer, I was assigned to a unit that of course wouldn't exist now, it was called the German War Documents Unit. What we really did, we did two things: we helped pursue and extradite Nazis who had fled abroad to Spain, to Argentina, to other countries; and we were liaison with historians who were working in the German war documents.

Q: This became the Berlin Document Center.

DUNNIGAN: It was the Berlin Document Center in its beginning, yes. There were three or four American historians there, and we were liaison with them. When they had to get things, we would get them for them, help them with requests that required government help and so forth. And in return they let us see various nuggets of information and so forth.

Now that was interesting and I did that for a year, at the end of which the full panoply of administrative services was invented for the Foreign Service. It appeared, and we got our first administrative officer. Well, he required a general services officer, so they look around for a junior officer, and I was appointed general services officer. Which I found a little less interesting but nonetheless challenging, because I found out how prickly people can be about certain perquisites and office space and schedules in communications centers and things like this, and use of automobiles and, oh, various other things, and residences, although we didn't have to worry too much about residences because they were assigned usually by the military to us. That went on for awhile.

Our admin officer was a fine old gentlemen of British extraction who had been a prisoner of war in Singapore in the British Army and had become an American after the war, naturalized, and showed up as our admin officer in Berlin. I don't think one could regard him as a great success as an admin officer, although he was a very fine man and we all liked him, but he was still psychologically unrecovered from his four years in a Japanese prison camp.

So after about nine months of doing that, I was given my first job in political reporting. I was assigned to follow developments in eastern Germany, in what we called the Soviet Zone of Occupation at that time. And this was fascinating. This was when the East Germans were founding what they called, euphemistically, the People's Police, but which was really an army, officered by former high Nazi officials. We got information from this that allowed us to complain to the Russians, but they pooh-poohed this, of course, saying it was merely a strengthening of the local police and so forth, although we had tangible evidence of military units parading, drilling and so forth. And this became worrisome.

And also reporting on developments within East Germany. Now occasionally in those days German politicians could come out from the zone, come to West Berlin, and talk to us, which was of course long before the Wall. And they often did so at their own risk. But they would, they wanted to talk, and so we got some very interesting stories about conditions in Saxony or in Rostock or wherever. The clergy were good that way, some of the university people, and politicians.

Q: Were these people that were coming disturbed at what was happening?

DUNNIGAN: Yes, they were definitely disturbed, because they felt powerless. They said all control is exercised by the SED, the German Communist Party in East Germany. And while they belonged generally to either the old Christian Democratic Party, which had existed there in '45, '46 and still existed in the shadow, or the Liberal Democratic Party, they were merely tolerated. They had no authority, no power; everything was done by the Communists. The only way to get ahead in East Germany was to be a member of the SED.

I came on home leave in the summer of '49, got married, went back to Berlin, and picked up again on this work on East Germany. And this was a fascinating period, because it was at that time that the German Democratic Republic was established, in October of '49. We saw signs of that coming by reading the papers from the Soviet zone, which would contain reports of slogans adopted by factories, saying: "We must have our own government. If they have one in Bonn, why can't we have one?" One began to wonder why this was being orchestrated all over the zone at the same time. And it was quite clear that they were preparing a move, which they did on the 7th of October of that year.

It was just at that time, too, that the East German problem was looming so large in our calculations that we established a separate unit to follow East Germany, headed at first by George Morgan and including several other officers. Well, I worked with them for a while, then I was detached from that, because that group took over all the reporting in East Germany. Where it had been one person, say, the year before, it was now three at least. In fact, it soon was four or five.

I was assigned to a different responsibility, and that was to represent the US on what was called the Civil Administration Committee of the Berlin Command de Tour, the group that ran the city. Ostensibly four-power, but by the time I got on it the Russians had been

out for over a year, so it was basically French, British, and American. And we reported to the commandants. The Civil Administration Committee handled all of the basic details of running the city. The German authorities would report to us, ask our permission to do things. We would give it, usually, if it were sensible; otherwise we would explain why it wasn't possible. Many of the things had to do with legal matters, going back to German law, so we had a legal subcommittee. We had a labor subcommittee, because we had to look after labor affairs and various things. This was a fascinating job, and I did that for the last year I was in Berlin.

Q: When did the blockade come?

DUNNIGAN: The blockade started on the 24th of June 1948, and lasted until the 12th of May '49.

Q: Prior to the blockade, were you and the others around you concerned that something might happen? How did you feel about being in Berlin and inside this area?

DUNNIGAN: We maintained, outwardly, that Berlin was a four-power city and that we, as a member of the occupying powers, could go anywhere we wanted within the city. We could not go outside the city into the Soviet zone except on one road that linked us to the West. That was the autobahn that went...

Q: Through Helmstedt?

DUNNIGAN: Helmstedt, that's right. And there was a train line. We could go by train either to Frankfurt or to Bremerhaven, but we could not go outside the city in any other direction. But we deliberately went into the Soviet sector of Berlin, as it was called, frequently. In fact, they had the best opera there. And we would drive around, just to be seen, in American cars and so forth. We didn't want the Russians to say they had sort of shut us out of there, or frightened us out. And in those days you could take the subway or the elevated train across. There was no problem, just right in the city.

Now it began to get a little dicey in April of '48. The Russians had walked out of the Control Council, the main governing body for governing Germany. Marshal Sadolovsky had walked out at the end of March '48 over a dispute, as I recall, about currency reform, because the Russians didn't want any. The Western powers had said, "Look, nothing will ever get this country off its back unless they have a solid currency." Well, there was a to-do about that, and Sadolovsky walked out and never came back.

Then about four weeks later a British plane coming into Berlin was, as I recall, shot down by the Russians, who said it had strayed out of the air corridor (which was nonsense) and crashed. And this told us they were ready to play hardball. They stopped the trains from Helmstedt around that period, on the pretext that the bridge across the River Elbe needed repair and would be closed for some time. So the noose was tightening. We still had the

autobahn to drive back and forth; but they could have at any time said the autobahn bridge needed repair.

I think it was on the 21st of June that we declared currency reform for West Germany and West Berlin. The Russians then declared a blockade on the 24th, and we started the airlift on the 26th.

Q: What was the feeling there? Did you think we were going to make it when this started?

DUNNIGAN: We didn't know. We didn't know how long it would last. We kept getting reports from Ambassador Bedell Smith in Moscow. He'd have conversations, including those with Stalin, about this, and Stalin would sort of grunt or nod and say, yes, he thought something could be worked out, but, you know, it never was.

Dependents who were there (and I didn't have any at that time) were offered an opportunity to leave. And very few left; most wanted to stay. They wanted to ride it out and not leave the Russians with the feeling they'd forced us out.

The situation didn't get questionable until the fall. The airlift worked fairly well in the early months, and there had been enough supplies there to last, but it soon became evident that the two great needs over the winter were going to be coal and potatoes. So the planes began to bring those in.

We started out using C-47s. While they were state of the art in some ways in those days, they weren't very big.

Q: Yes, they were two-engined planes.

DUNNIGAN: Later, within a few months, we began to get C-54s.

Q: Which was a four-engined, bigger plane.

DUNNIGAN: Yes. General Tunnel, a lieutenant general in the Air Force who was brought from the States and put in charge of the airlift, commandeered almost every C-54 in the world and brought it to Frankfurt. So, with the C-54s, they could bring a lot more in. Still, you were going to feed a city of two and a half million people, and it wasn't at all sure whether we could make it through the winter.

The worst time of all came in November, because, for about ten days in a row, there was heavy fog and planes couldn't get in. We didn't have the sophisticated radar or landing-guidance equipment we have now; it was very primitive. And also, most of the time, we were using Tempelhof Airport, which is right in the city of Berlin and wasn't really built for very large planes. It took some skill. Later, we built a new airport with the French and the British, Tegel Airport, a much larger airport. But that wasn't completed until February or March. So, in November, we were still using Tempelhof, in our sector, and Gatau, a

smaller airport, in the British sector, and the British were bringing in their share of matériel, too. Now the feeling was that if that fog had persisted for another month or so, we might have been done in.

But, fortunately, after about ten days, it lifted enough for the planes to start getting back in. And it was amazing to see them come and go...land, unload, and be gone in ninety seconds--incredible!

Q: What did this do to our relations with the Germans during this period?

DUNNIGAN: It certainly solidified the relations with the Germans in Berlin, because there was a feeling: We're all in this together. Now we, as occupiers, lived much better than they did. We still were getting PX supplies, although when electricity went off, as it did, we didn't have any electricity, things of that nature. We were given five gallons, as I recall, of gasoline a month for our cars, so everybody was car-pooling when they used a car in those days. I had a bicycle along with my car, and I used that a great deal during the blockade. It got to be a stick-it-out thing, everybody saying, "By God, we're just not going to let them do this to us!" And we did it.

Q: Did you feel a military threat?

DUNNIGAN: Well, we were always aware that it was there. The Russians, in my recollection, never particularly threatened that. They didn't threaten to come in. There didn't seem to be any large movement of their forces that would indicate they were planning something. All three powers had garrisons in Berlin, small, they would have been overrun, but it would have been a pretty stiff fight for a few days. And the Germans would have sabotaged everything the Russians did anyhow; they hated them at the time.

No, it solidified our relations with the West Germans. Because, for instance, in the airlift, all of the manual labor was being done by Germans at the airport, unloading that coal, unloading the potatoes, telling the plane when it could move out again. All of that was done by them, and pretty soon the spirit of cooperation replaced that of sort of occupier-occupied. It was very good in that respect.

Q: How about, during this time, your contacts with the Soviets and going into the Soviet zone and all that?

DUNNIGAN: We still went into the Soviet sector. They never stopped us. They had thrown the city government of all Berlin out of East Berlin, but we wouldn't let them stop us going there. Although, just because of the lack of gasoline, we probably never went there as often. We could go by subway, though--when the subway worked, but, again, you had power shortages.

Q: Well, now, in this blockade, were the East Germans living better than the West Germans in Berlin?

DUNNIGAN: The East Germans, of course, were not directly affected by the blockade. Their level had been perhaps close to that of the West Berliners before the blockade--bad for both of them really.

But with the introduction of the new currency reform in West Berlin, prices meant something. Items began to have value again. West Germans had things that East Germans could only admire. So gradually, gradually there became a cleft between the two that grew wider over the years and ended, as we know now, with tearing the Wall down.

Q: Did you have any feel for how Robert Murphy ran his shop, or was he too far away?

DUNNIGAN: Well, yes and no. He worked, of course, extremely closely with General Clay, who was the military governor, and he was a most kind and considerate chief to the junior officers. As I recall, he did not hold staff meetings that included everybody, but we would hear from others what he wanted, and things like this. No, I'm a great admirer of his, and I think he did a splendid job there. We know, because I could read the telegrams, that he was cautioning firmness in regard to the blockade. General Clay, of course, had wanted us to send an armored unit up the autobahn to shoot our way in when the Russians stopped our land transit. Murphy seemed to go along with that, but I don't think he was completely sold on the idea, because he realized the dangers.

Q: Well, we didn't have much of a military in those days.

DUNNIGAN: Well, the truth of the matter is, we had little military. We had gutted this wonderful force we'd had in '45. We had occupation troops there. Most of the combat troops had long since been discharged from the Army. We had a force that was called a constabulary in West Germany, and it wasn't until the Korean War, a year after the end of the blockade, that we began to build up our forces again. No, Clay and Murphy were well aware of our weakness in that regard.

Q: Well, you then left and you went to London. You were there from '50 to '54. What were you doing?

DUNNIGAN: My time in London was split into two periods. The first two and a half years, I was in the political section. I was reporting on German and Austrian affairs, which were very important because, of course, the British were associates with us in the occupation of both those countries, and we were trying to write an Austrian peace treaty at the time, and there were negotiations on Germany, what to do with it. The Bonn Republic had just come into existence and so forth. Also, my other job was helping report on the Liberal and Conservative parties in Britain. I worked under Bill Tremble in both those, who was our first secretary at the time there.

Then, at the change of administration when Eisenhower took over from Truman, we sent a new ambassador, Winthrop Aldrich, and I was made his staff aide. So my last nearly two years was spent as staff aide to the ambassador.

Q: Then go back to the first part. How did you work with your British colleagues on Austrian and German policies?

DUNNIGAN: Extremely closely. We were down there with them almost every day in the Foreign Office, going over our mutual messages, you know, saying that Washington thinks we should do this, and they'd say, yes, we can do this and that, but we couldn't go that far. Usually they were holding us back a little bit, it seemed to me. But they were friendly. They had outstanding leadership from Frank Roberts, who, I guess, would be the equivalent of something like an Under Secretary for German affairs. They elevated that position to a very high one. And Dennis Allen and Pat Roberts, both of whom became outstanding British ambassadors later, headed in sequence the German section there. And we worked very closely with them.

Q: Was there a divergence in feelings? I mean, the British, of course, had been fighting the Germans for a long time. We came in some time afterwards, and maybe we were more inclined to forgive and forget. Was this a problem or not?

DUNNIGAN: It was absolutely a problem. You're absolutely right, they had a different outlook. They really didn't like Germans. And most Americans who spent any time in Germany did, in my experience. But the British just did not like them. And the Germans sensed this; they knew right away to play off the Americans against the British.

I'll tell you a little story. Once, in Berlin, one of our very senior officers, who later became an ambassador in many countries, after having come back from a Control Council meeting where all four of the powers had sat, had a gin and tonic, and then he threw the ice out and said, "We may be the dumbest people in the world, but the British are the most stupid." Now this was in relation to a move they made supporting the Russians that he felt was crazy, but I just add that as an indication of the reaction you would get from certain people.

I saw this frequently in the houses of Parliament, because I went down there to follow all the German and Austrian debates, there was a gut, almost vitriolic, anti-German feeling, particularly on the Labour benches.

Q: Well, that's surprising.

DUNNIGAN: Yes. Less so on the Liberals, and the Conservatives were generally less inclined certainly than Labour to take that attitude. No, you couldn't be there long without noticing.

Q: Was this because of the war, or do you think this went farther back?

DUNNIGAN: I think it went back to at least World War I and the tremendous slaughter of British manhood then and the behavior of the kaiser that grew up. They felt he let the side down.

Q: Yes, Queen Victoria's grandson.

DUNNIGAN: Exactly. No, it went back to at least World War I, but of course what happened in World War II exacerbated it. Now it was a little ameliorated on the Conservative side because so many of them had been, I guess, "caught out." In the '30s they had been all for appeasing Hitler and the Germans, and it was only Churchill's fortitude and persistence that brought Britain to where it was, where they finally began to re-arm and so forth. So, many of the Conservatives were not in much of a position to take a very loud stance, but the Labour people did.

Q: Would you say our embassy was more comfortable with the Conservatives than with Labour?

DUNNIGAN: Indeed. I think there's little question about that. We had an excellent man who blazed the way, before my time, with the Labour Party. He was the only man in 1945 who had any Labour contacts, a man named Sam Burger. And Sam was widely regarded by the Labour people even when I got there, and he'd departed some time before that. He was followed, the torch was picked up, by Dave Linebaugh and Wanda Zengotita in my time, and they had close links with the Labour Party. But we had a large political section, a large economic section, and there was no question in my mind they were much comfortable with the Conservative people. They were more like them, I think.

Q: Also, there is an ideology in the Labour Party that we just don't have in the United States. I mean, you could be union, but that's a nuts and bolts thing, it has nothing to do with: "It's us against them," because we all hope to be "them" at some point.

DUNNIGAN: And we don't go around singing "The Red Flag," you know, and things like this, which they do, and did.

Q: Were there any particular issues where you found that we and the British were dealing with German and Austrian affairs where we really were having a hard time resolving?

DUNNIGAN: Yes, of course. This was the period when NATO was building, and we were involved in Korea. And we felt strongly that there had to be a German defense contribution. This was first stated by Secretary Acheson, I believe, in the summer of 1950. And it horrified the British. And it horrified the French to an extent, too. And it horrified some Germans... But we persisted and said, "Look, we cannot bear this entire burden of defending everything by ourselves, particularly since it's Germany we're going to defend in Europe. And we think that these people must contribute to their own

defense." Well, Chancellor Adenauer was chary of that at first, but he agreed finally that they could do so. And then the British were distressed, they were torn. They could see the logic of our position, but their intestinal feeling was that this was a bad thing to do.

Q: Was this at your level, too, the people that you were dealing with?

DUNNIGAN: Oh, yes. You'd go out and speak to groups, I booked several Labour groups, and there was no question about it that they didn't care for the idea of putting guns back in Jerry's hands again--they're just too good at it, you know, and so forth.

So that was one of the big issues while I was there, the whole question of how to arrange a German defense contribution.

Q: How did we feel in the embassy? I mean, I'm talking about at your level and the people. Were there problems there, or was this: "Well, what the hell, we've got to do it."?

DUNNIGAN: I felt that we had to do it. I'd served in Germany, I'd been in Berlin during the blockade, and I guess I saw things more in black and white. And I felt it was necessary that we got some help there. I didn't like the idea, I'll say that. If it could have been done any other way, I would have felt much better. But the more I thought about it and the more I read about it and the more I heard, the more I came around to believing that we had to go that route. There were others in the embassy who never really accepted it, I know that. They weren't directly involved; you would hear this in cafeteria conversations and cocktail party conversations and so forth.

But an agreement was finally worked out. We went through the tortuous period, of course. I was no longer working with German Affairs, but I was still in London trying to set up this European Defense Community that was torpedoed at the last moment by the French Parliament in their pique about Indochina. Now this left everything up in the air, because we'd put all our marbles behind that. We'd been sold on that idea by the French. I remember a long series of telegrams in the summer of '51 from David Bruce--telegrams that were very well done, drafted, I know, by Martin Herz, most of them--explaining why the French felt it was necessary that there was a German contribution and it had to be part of European units, no separate German divisions and things of this nature. Well, the US bought this and we pushed it, and that was shot down in flames by the French themselves later.

Now, after I left London, to just finish the story, this was brought to a conclusion by Anthony Eden in one of his finest hours. He was foreign minister in the last Churchill government, and he flew around Europe on a whirlwind tour and persuaded the others that there had to be a German contribution, and it had to come through NATO, and that certain safeguards could be set up through the Western European Union and so forth.

That was the way it was finally arranged. West Germany, the Federal Republic, was given its sovereignty. The end of the occupation came on the 5th of May, '55. At the same time, Germany was accepted into NATO. It was all part of the deal.

Q: But, at your level, this was a major bone of contention, too?

DUNNIGAN: It was a bone of contention. A major one? Yes, I would think so, although, as I say, Korea was on everybody's minds in those days.

Now the Austrian side, we were negotiating the Austrian peace treaty. I would go to a meeting or two on that. I was not the negotiator, of course, Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson was. But he had help from Red Dowling and Francis Williams, who had come over, and we worked closely with them. The issues there were involved. The Trieste question came up then. The Austrian treaty was taken care of, but Trieste was another issue then.

Q: While you were in Britain, they were going through a very difficult economic time, weren't they?

DUNNIGAN: It was bad.

Q: And this must have been kind of hard, wasn't it, to be from the United States where things were going very nicely, thank you, in way, and to see Britain really going through the equivalent of wartime rationing.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, they were. And, in fact, the rationing was worse than wartime. When we got to London, we, along with the British, got eight-penny-worth of meat a week. Now that isn't much meat, even though prices were far lower then. And various other commodities were rationed. For instance, even though we were at the embassy, we could not buy Scotch whiskey. We could import bourbon, but we could not buy Scotch whiskey. It was all going for export in those years. Little things like that.

It was the last year of the Attlee administration, the first Labour government after the war, and it had run out of steam, it had run out of ideas. And they were beginning to squabble amongst themselves about the costs of the free health service and so forth. All that was mounting up.

It's true, Britain had not made its comeback. It was only beginning. The last couple of years we were there, things began to get a little better.

Q: Tom, you were the ambassador's aide, to whom?

DUNNIGAN: Winthrop Aldrich.

Q: I wonder if you could characterize him. I don't know the gentleman, but, you know, it looks like you just look at his name and you say, oh, my God, another one of these rich guys who paid his way into the Court of Saint James. How was he as an ambassador?

DUNNIGAN: That's an interesting question. He was a formidable person. A blueblood of the bluest. A nephew of the Rockefellers and the uncle of Nelson Rockefeller, David Rockefeller and so forth. He'd been chairman of the board of the Chase Bank before he came over. It wasn't Chase Manhattan at the time, it was just the Chase Bank. He had been a well-known yachtsman. He'd been a naval officer in World War I. A Harvard graduate of the Class of 1905. Married a wealthy woman, Harriet, in New York. Was very big in New York and Newport society. A great contributor to the Republican Party. And extremely Anglophile. Before the war, he'd entertained the Prince of Wales and others. He knew them all. He knew all of the figures of that generation. And the British were pleased to have him, because they knew, when he was nominated, that he was an Anglophile. Now, at that time, Mr. Aldrich was about 68 when he arrived, so he was not a young man, but he was distinguished looking. He worked on the big problems and understood them. We had a magnificent DCM in Julius Holmes, who could run the embassy like a smooth machine, and did run it, and took much of the load off the ambassador. But when there was something to be taken up with the prime minister or the foreign minister, Winthrop Aldrich would do it. And he'd do it well. He had their confidence. And he was well-connected socially in Britain. He knew every duke and duchess and many of the earls and so forth in the UK. He lived well, entertained well. He was responsible for getting the present residence, Winfield House, released by the US Air Force, which was using it as an officers' club. The Air Force turned down his request, so he merely wrote a letter to his good friend Harold Talbot, the secretary of the Air Force. Within a month, the deed had been done. So he did many things.

I think one of his finest hours in my time came during the Iranian oil crisis and Mossadegh. You know, after Anglo-Iranian had been nationalized in '51, the shah had flown and Mossadegh had taken over. Our business interests were heavily affected there. And the British were distressed by this, so we worked closely with them. Herbert Hoover, Jr., an oil man, was sent over and spent some months with us there, working only on that problem, working with the British, working with the embassy. (A very fine gentleman, I will add, I liked him a lot.)

But nothing could get done. The Iranians were playing their tricks on us. And I well remember one day, it must have been in the mid-summer of '53, Mr. Aldrich and Hoover and, I believe, Evan Wilson, who was then our Middle East expert in London, met, and somebody else from Washington was there. And Aldrich came out with his jaw set and he said, "We've got to settle this thing. I'm going down to see Eden." So he went down to see Eden, and that was the beginning of the end. The British caved-in on certain points. We said, "You've got to, because this is going too far. It's hurting both our countries much too much." And we got a settlement. And the shah was back within a few months.

I don't know the inner details of that, and I don't know if the book has ever been written about it, because it was very closely held at the time.

Q: But, again, you know, looking at this thing, career or non-career, sometimes a man with the credentials such as Aldrich can talk in ways that somebody who just does not have those connections...

DUNNIGAN: Could never have done. Could never have done. And that's why I don't resent our sending non-career people to posts like London. I think there can be utility. Now you get somebody who is a hybrid, like David Bruce, who's been both, then, of course, you're in the best of both worlds.

Q: Yes, Ellsworth Bunker is another.

DUNNIGAN: Ellsworth Bunker, those people, but they're few and far between.

Q: Yes. Well, Tom, you served in Manila and Hong Kong from '54 to '57 as a visa officer. And maybe we could lump these two together rather than go through the whole thing. If not, I mean, if there's something...

DUNNIGAN: No, by all means.

Q: What was your impression of operating as a consular officer in the Far East in those days? It must have been a come-down, for one thing, wasn't it?

DUNNIGAN: It was, in a sense. And I had a well-placed friend here in the department who, when I was back here in training getting ready to go, said, "Don't be ridiculous. Don't do that, I'll get you a job here in the department."

I said, "No. I want to go see what consular work is like. I haven't done it yet. I haven't been to the Far East, and I'm going to do it."

Well, he gave me a look as though he thought I were off my rocker. Because he'd seen Manila, he'd been out there in the consulates and come back and said, "What a hole..."

But I went out there, and I was given the visa section under a consul general of the very old school, Hayward Hill.

Q: Who only just recently deceased. He was for years in Athens. I remember him living in Athens.

DUNNIGAN: And, as you know, his bequest of almost a million dollars to DACOR took everyone's breath away. He was that sort of man, generous to a fault, but not a tower of strength on consular matters, if I can put it charitably.

Anyhow, the visa section there consisted of myself, Jim Mason as vice consul, and two American consular assistants. And we had a tremendous load of visas, because, as you know, the Philippines is one of our problem areas, and we were going from morning till night. It was interesting, I must say.

My wife said to me, after I'd been in Manila and Hong Kong, she said, "You know, I wish you'd go back there, because you always came home with the most interesting stories there. You don't have any interesting stories now that you're doing other work."

And I think that's true, because you were dealing with human-interest problems.

The pressure to come to America was increasing all the time. Jim Mason left and we finally got Hugh McCall, another consular officer, and they worked away, standing out at the visa counter, interviewing people, you know. We gave the first refugee relief visa while I was in Manila, too (I have a picture of myself signing that), to a couple.

But visas in Hong Kong was quite different, because there you were dealing with a totally alien culture and language, so most of your interviews had to be done with interpreters. And you were dealing with a dialect, the Tai Shan dialect, that's not very widespread, but this is where most of the emigrants originally come from in China.

Q: This is from the Canton area.

DUNNIGAN: Canton area, right. Tai Shan is a rural district outside of Canton. There, of course, the big problem was the fraud problem, which had resulted, of course, in one of my predecessor's ending up in Leavenworth.

Q: The prison in Leavenworth.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, in the prison in Leavenworth, some several years before. But that was a totally different type of operation. I had more people there. We had, I think, four vice consuls and a wonderful consular supervisor in Buck Backey, who was as good as they come. So we had a happy unit and it worked well. We were assisted by a very large fraud unit of about fifteen investigators who'd been sent out from Washington. They were investigating both visa and refugee relief fraud, led by Ed Garrity and Frank Waffen and others.

Q: Laurie Lawrence, I think, was there.

DUNNIGAN: Laurie Lawrence was one. Vic Dikeos was another. Good people, worked very closely with me. They'd come in and say, "Tom, look what we found under this old applicant's bed. Here is her whole history going back, and here's her fraud school papers she picked up last week." You know, things like this. No, they did good work. It was an interesting place to be in those days.

Q: Well, then, sort of from this touch of real life, you came back.

DUNNIGAN: Well, excuse me, one thing yet. I well remember it. One Sunday night I had to go down and meet a battered old steamer coming from Shanghai. And on that steamer was Father Fulgence Gross, a Franciscan priest, who had been held for six years in solitary confinement in Shanghai and had just been released. There were three Franciscans and myself there. It was about eight o'clock on a Sunday night. Father Gross came out and he just stood there. He looked around and he started to weep, you know, just the sight of his fellow priests, but also freedom. I never forgot that. The next day, he was kind enough to come into the consulate, and we got some of his story down, and we got him packed off to Chicago where he was going back to his family. But some of the things he told us about the Communist jail made us realize that it was for real. The conditions were terrible.

But that's the sort of thing you do in consular work. I really found it fascinating.

Q: Well, now, Tom, then you came back to Washington, where you served from '57 to '61. What were you doing?

DUNNIGAN: I was in the Executive Secretariat.

Q: The whole time?

DUNNIGAN: Yes, for those four years. The first year, I was a regular worker up there, and then I took over from Gene McAuliffe as the head of what was called the Reports and Operations section, with about fifteen officers under me at that time. We were doing all the paperwork that went to the secretary and the Under Secretary, filtering it up through the executive director. We also were accompanying the secretary and the Under Secretary on their trips abroad, so I made a number of trips around the world with various secretaries of state.

Q: What was your impression of how the department operated? I mean, you were in a good position to take a look. To begin with, it was the Dulles...

DUNNIGAN: Yes, I was there with Dulles. Dulles, Herter, and Rusk, I had three of them.

Q: By that time, Dulles had been there some time and it was a fairly well-established operation. How did it work?

DUNNIGAN: Under Mr. Dulles, I think it operated smoothly. And out of his vest pocket, too. Mr. Dulles was the law. He had very strong views on certain policies, and these were our policies. He had few people close to him. Part of this was because he had a vision problem, he couldn't see well. In a staff meeting, you know, he couldn't see many people. But, of all three of them, when you got them in the small confines of an airplane on an overseas trip, Mr. Dulles was the most human in some ways--coming out and playing

bridge with us, having a good time and relaxing with his old sweater and slippers on. When you got to the conference, he was all steely granite, you know, every bit the international lawyer-turned-diplomat.

Mr. Herter was the patrician, in a nutshell.

And Dean Rusk is just a fine fellow, a nice man and an excellent thinker.

Q: Did you notice any difference in the method of operation, of using the secretariat, with them?

DUNNIGAN: Mr. Dulles, I would say, was more a conceptualizer. He really was. Mr. Rusk was more of a staff man in some ways. Excellent staff man. A very bright man himself. Dulles didn't care about staff work.

A good example is: When he was wrestling, back in the mid-'50s (this was just before my time), with trying to establish something called the Baghdad Pact, I'm told that he did not deal with the assistant secretary for Near East and African Affairs on that, George Allen, he'd talk only to Herman Ayles, who was then the desk officer for that Iranian peninsula up there. "Because," he said, "Mr. Ayles understands what I want." He did that in other areas, too. He would find the person who understood what he wanted and work directly--call him on the phone and say, "Well, what can we do now? I've got this idea, is that a good one?"

And they'd say, "Well, Mr. Secretary, yes, but, you know, you'd have the French going to the wall." Or something like this.

Whereas Rusk would never do that. He was, you know, pretty much right down the line.

And we had some very, very strong and good office directors in my day. I think of Stewart Rockwell running Middle East, very good; Martin Hillenbrand doing German Affairs; Bob McBride doing Western Europe. And there were others of that caliber. You could depend on them, and the secretaries did depend on them for those things.

Q: Did you find, because you were working basically on clearing a certain amount of papers and all that, that if they came from one area, you didn't have to worry as much about these papers because the officers knew what they were doing?

DUNNIGAN: That's what I'm trying to say. Exactly right. If you saw something that had been cleared or drafted by the type of officer I mentioned, there was no problem.

Q: Well, you know, one of the things that I look at in these interviews of people who are in positions such as yours is the various bureaus. I wonder if you could characterize sort of a ranking, you know, as you looked at this. I mean, I'm talking about just in clout and in effectiveness at that time.

DUNNIGAN: I think, during Mr. Dulles and Mr. Herter's period, you'd have to say the Bureau of European Affairs was running it. African Affairs didn't matter; there weren't any real African affairs much. You couldn't ignore what was then known as the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, just because things kept happening out there that you didn't want to happen, like the Quemoy and Matsu incidents, and various other things, and always trouble around Korea, and then the beginnings of trouble in Indochina. Near East and Asian Affairs, I'd say, would be the third tier at that time. Again, it couldn't be ignored, because you had the Israeli-Arab problem always, and you had India out there, and, in my period, as I referred to, we had the Iran oil crisis and Mossadegh. Latin America came last.

Q: Well, now, you know, every person I ask, it always comes up this way. Now...

DUNNIGAN: May I make an addition to that?

Q: Yes.

DUNNIGAN: When Mr. Rusk took over, it was changed. I would say at least a priority as high as Europe with him was Far East.

Q: And of course he had been assistant secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, plus the fact that the whole Indochina thing had reached a boil.

DUNNIGAN: I think Far East certainly went above Middle East then.

Q: Well, now, the ranking of Latin American Affairs. I mean, looking at it at the time we're talking about. Did you have a feeling about the issues there, I mean, it just went Latin America was not of much concern to us, or also it was because it wasn't as strong a bureau to bring its problems there? How did you feel about that?

DUNNIGAN: I think part of the problem is our Eurocentrism: our backgrounds, our educations, and so forth. We don't study Latin American history. Until recent years, we didn't study Spanish enough. I think that's going to be changing in years to come, but I'm not sure our Eurocentrism will end. Now, I agree with you, there were some strong officers in Latin America, but there were fewer. There were fewer. They didn't stand out. And the thing is, it was known as pretty much an incestuous circuit. You know, if you knew Spanish, you'd go out from one post in Latin America to another post in Latin America, with an occasional diversion of Spain maybe, and back in Washington, but, you know, you wouldn't get around. That was less so with the other bureaus.

Q: I know, as a thirty-year veteran of the Foreign Service, I assiduously avoided learning Spanish because I always considered Latin America to be a black hole--if you learned Spanish, you disappeared never to be heard of again.

DUNNIGAN: Well, that was true in the old days, and Kissinger finally got so mad at that in 1974 that he said, "We're going to have a shake-up." I remember that's why I got sent to Israel, we had a shake-up.

Q: Well, one last question about this time you were in the Secretariat. How did it work, the transition between the Eisenhower administration and the Kennedy administration? I mean, how did you see it? Was it a friendly or a hostile takeover, from your perspective of this takeover?

DUNNIGAN: Yes, very interesting. At that time, I was acting deputy director for the moment because we'd lost some... And it was just at the time that we had moved into the new building. We'd been over on 21st Street until December of 1960. And, finally, most everybody else had moved, and Secretary Herter said that it was time to go, so we moved over. That was six weeks before the inauguration of Kennedy.

The takeover didn't go all that smoothly, because Kennedy was determined to get his own people in there. And he did. They came in at all levels. Most of them charged-up. Ideas. Bright. Good, bright people, ready to roll. He made one mistake, of course. He put Chester Bowles as number two in the department, in charge of ambassadorial assignments. And that didn't work very well at all.

Q: Why didn't that work?

DUNNIGAN: Mr. Bowles is a distinguished gentleman and a very fine one, but he had strong ideas of his own.

I have a Foreign Service friend, a retired ambassador, who once accompanied him on a trip out in Ethiopia, and he said, "I wish Mr. Bowles would stop apologizing for not being born black." Now I don't know how fair that is, but it gave you a flavor.

Both he and his wife, as you know, his wife particularly, when they served in India, adopted Indian costume and walking around in saris. They felt very strongly for the Third World. Now this was very noticeable because Mr. Bowles was on one side of the Secretariat and the secretary was on the other, so we knew his visitors and followed his schedule. And anybody from the Third World--any prince, any prime minister or foreign minister--could get in to see Bowles, but people from the more advanced world often had great difficulty getting appointments. But if you were from Africa or Asia, and Latin America to a lesser extent, you could get an appointment.

And Mr. Bowles just wasn't a staff man. Nick Veliotes was then working in his office. Nick was an old friend of mine, we worked together in the Secretariat. He said, "Tom, he's got a stack of papers that high, but he doesn't do paperwork. All he wants to do is talk with people. He does that all day long, and we can't get any actions out of him." So I think that was the reason he was eventually sent off as ambassador.

Q: Were there any other problems of some of the...I think of a man who just died very recently, Stephen Smith, and some others? These were, in those days, considered rather brash young people. Did this affect our work at all, as far as you saw it, in the Secretariat?

DUNNIGAN: We could read it was going on. It didn't really affect us; we were sort of insulated up there from that type. Down in ARA there were a couple of them that had come in, hard-charging and so forth. For the first year, no one knew who was in charge of ARA. You had Adolf Berle and Bob Sayer and a few others, all sort of with titles of acting assistant secretary, and no one knew who was in charge. Goodwin was there. Very peculiar arrangement, I must say.

Funny things stick out in your mind. (I'll probably be shot for saying some of these things.) President Kennedy decided early on that he wanted to come over and visit the department. Secretary Rusk had just moved into his new quarters and so forth. The executive secretary's office has a glass wall facing out on the elevator bank there on the seventh floor. I was out there, and we had a very attractive black secretary there with me and one or two other people. And suddenly the door burst open, a number of people rushed out, and there came the president, glowing, ruddy, looking never better. As he wandered around our corner and he saw Marilyn, our black secretary, he gave a big smile, you know: Ah! Glad-to-see-you're-integrated-up-here sort of thing. I laughed at that.

Another story Dean Rusk told years later about those days...and I hope I'm not rambling too much.

Q: No, this is fine.

DUNNIGAN: We got word in early January of '61 that Mr. Rusk, who had been nominated secretary of state, wanted to come over and look at the new office. Well, Secretary Herter said, "Yes, come on over. I'd be delighted to see you here." So we were told to see that the man had no trouble. So I took one of our young officers in the Secretariat and I said, "Frank, I want you to go downstairs. He's going to come in that main C Street entrance, and I want you to meet him and escort him upstairs. And here's his picture and so forth." Frank's a good man, I thought, all right. "And, you know, show him around." Well, a few minutes later, Frank came up with Mr. Rusk, a tall gentleman with a distinguished round face, and bald, you know. They went into the secretary's office, and everything went well.

Years later, Rusk said that what had happened was this: He said, "You know, I got to the department, and I said to my wife later that night, `I've never seen such friendly people.'"

She said, "Well, what do you mean?"

He said, "Well, I got to the department and there was this young officer waiting to see me, and he said, `Well, hello, Dean. Come on in, Dean.'" He said, "I looked at him and he said, `Right this way, Dean.'"

Well, it turns out that Frank had read his biography and that he'd been a dean out at Mills College, you see, and thought that was his title.

And Rusk, he chuckled when he told that story.

Q: You left the Secretariat in 1961, and then you were in Bonn for three years.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, after a year at the National War College, I was in Bonn for three years. And I would have been there longer, but my tour was broken and I was brought back to the department.

Q: What were you doing in Bonn?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I had two very interesting jobs in Bonn. I was in the political section my whole time there. And the political section had three main sections. I had one of them, and that was the political-military section, which dealt with all our relations with German military, our liaison with the American forces in Europe, on the military side; on the political side, we handled such things as the MLF, that project.

Q: What was it, multilateral...

DUNNIGAN: Multilateral force, yes, in which we were going to put missiles on board merchant ships in the Atlantic. We also dealt with NATO affairs, on the political side, and a number of other things. I did that for a little over a year, and then, because of a change in the office, I was moved into another section, the internal political section, dealing with the German political parties, their structure, the Bundestag, and so forth. I found that fascinating, too. So they were two very worthwhile assignments that I enjoyed.

Q: Were you there during sort of the Berlin Wall crisis?

DUNNIGAN: No, I came a year after the Berlin Wall had been put up. The third section in the political section, which I didn't mention, was known as Berlin and Eastern affairs, and they dealt entirely with that.

Q: Well, all right, it was a year after the Berlin Wall went up and all. How did you and your colleagues view "the Soviet threat" at that time?

DUNNIGAN: We saw it in military terms. There was no question they had large forces in Eastern Europe, and they had also built-up the East German army to where it was a rather sizable and, we thought, fairly potent force. So there was no question in our minds that it was there. Now those were days when we still had the backlash of Stalin. I mean, that

whole era. We were not going to take any chances was the feeling. There was little dialogue. Kennedy did start it and did get the nuclear nonproliferation agreement signed and the limits on underground testing treaty finally signed, which were real breakthroughs in those days.

But the relations with the Soviets were cold. Our ambassadors would call on the Soviet ambassador in East Germany when they were there, in their capacity not as ambassador to East Germany, which we didn't recognize, but in their capacity as the representative to the Control Commission for Germany, since the ambassadors were given those titles. But, aside from that, there was little dialogue back and forth, and that didn't happen until much later when Willy Brandt became prime minister and launched his Eastern policy.

Q: Were there any great crises in NATO, or was NATO a pretty solid system by the time you were there?

DUNNIGAN: By this time, NATO was a fairly solid organization. One of the major crises we had when I was doing political-military affairs, and it was a big one, was a fear in Washington, not shared by our embassy in Bonn, I must say, but I sensed it before I left, that if we did not do something to provide the Germans with nuclear weapons, they were going to get them on their own. Franz Joseph Strauss was defense minister, and, while he was a brilliant man, we didn't entirely trust his instincts that he was a nationalist. So this is why we came up with ideas like the multilateral force, which our navy abhorred, but which...

Q: It was also putting international crews...

DUNNIGAN: International crews, mixed-man crews on merchant ships. And some talk of having it on submarines, too, but that proved almost impossible. Merchant ships which would just cruise around aimlessly until needed and then launch their missiles.

I well remember, we were trying to sell this in NATO and were having a difficult time. We knew we had to get the big ones on our side. Harold MacMillan, as I recall, went along because he wanted other things from us. The French were not playing. So we needed the Germans. And George Ball, who by this time was Under Secretary, was sent over to persuade the Germans. It was in January of '63. We had a day-long meeting with Adenauer; I was along on that. At the end, the chancellor said, in translation, "Mr Secretary, my military people tell me this is not a good idea. But if your president wants it, we will go along," Which is all we could hope for. We put that in the bank, in a sense, went back to the embassy residence, and there, which was now about five-thirty or quarter to six at night, Mr. Ball received a message containing the speech that de Gaulle had made that day in which he'd blackballed Britain for the Economic Community. Well, Ball reddened and just about went through the roof.

Q: Because he was the supreme Europeanist.

DUNNIGAN: He was the supreme Europeanist, and this was a direct slap at him. And there were reporters present; the ambassador had invited a group of people over for a drink to meet Ball. And he said, as I recall, pretty much on the record, what he thought about de Gaulle for doing that, you know. He was livid about it. So, on the one hand, you had the good news from Adenauer and, on the other, the bad news from de Gaulle at the same time.

Q: What was your impression in dealing with the Germans as far as the depth of their democracy and the efficiency of their government within a democratic framework? I mean, at that time, how did you feel about it?

DUNNIGAN: Hopeful. Most of those we dealt with at that stage were veterans of World War II. They remembered it vividly. They'd had much more combat experience than almost all of our people. They certainly didn't want another war. They had no sympathy for the Russians and no truck with them. Maybe some sympathy, yes, but not for their system of life and certainly not to have it imposed on Germany.

Now Adenauer was a democrat in an authoritarian way. I mean, yes, he had elections and they were free elections, and he had a Parliament and it was a free Parliament, but he'd been raised in a strict authoritarian tradition himself, and he was already in his early ‘80s, I guess, at that time, so he could see no other way than, you know, when father decides, the children should behave.

But that is not out of keeping, I don't think, with German tradition in many ways. It has nothing to do with political democracy the way we understand it. Their behavior patterns at times are different.

We were constantly getting reports about, running into, hearing about, and seeing little splinter neo-Nazi group coming up, which on certain issues in certain regions would gain some thousands of votes. And we knew that there were unreconstructed and unrepentant Nazis there. They were largely not in positions of political power. Now it's true, they were getting into positions of economic power in the business world, where they were not forbidden, and things of that nature. There were a few of them in the Parliament, but very few basically of what we would call the "wrong" types. All in all, I would mark it as hopeful.

Q: How did you view George McGhee as an ambassador? How did he operate?

DUNNIGAN: I was there under two ambassadors: Walter Dowling and George McGhee. One year with Dowling and two with McGhee.

Q: Okay, sort of compare and contrast.

DUNNIGAN: Quite different. Dowling was the consummate traditional diplomat.

McGhee was boisterous, almost rambunctious, at times, brilliant at others. Hard working, dedicated. A man of a thousand ideas. Loyal to his staff. Quite effective, I think, with the Germans. A man who spoke all over Germany all the time, touched every issue, dodged none. Put forth the American view quite, quite well. He couldn't stand a situation of quiet when nothing was going on. Something had to be going on. I don't know if I could explain that very well, but that was the feeling: "What's the old man up to now? What's he doing now?"

"Well, he's cooking up something."

For instance, for a long time, he had behind him in his office a speaker going all the time reciting German grammar. He thought, you know, subliminally he could pick it up even though he was talking to you. He'd say, "Now, Kennedy, what are we going to do about this? Hadn't we better go see so and so? Maybe I ought to write a letter to the president about this." Meanwhile, the German...

But that eventually stopped.

Q: Well, how about your impression of the Germans you dealt with in the bureaucracy?

DUNNIGAN: Competent, in almost all cases. I saw two different sides of them. The first year and a half, when I was in dealing in political-military affairs, I dealt a good with the beamte, the civil servant side, because we were dealing with problems relating to American forces.

I'll never forget the first day I arrived in Bonn. I was told by my staff that morning, "You've got to chair a meeting this afternoon."

I said, "Chair a meeting? I'm just here."

"Oh, no, this meeting has been set up for a long time."

I said, "What's the subject?"

And they said, "The subject is Sewer Duties in Kaisersbaumen."

I said, "What do I know about that?"

And they said, "Well, we'll help you."

The question was: How much should the American forces (which were very large in that area) have to pay for use of the sewer system?

So I found myself that afternoon, but I was flanked by our legal advisor, and my advisor on German affairs on these subjects, and a couple of other people, but I sweat through an afternoon...

But the German beamte you met in that sort of situation were very much the old-style, almost Prussian, type, you know. Correct. They knew their dossiers. They had answers for most of your arguments--not all, but most of them. Humor was not their long suit by any means.

Now it was different when I would go to the Foreign Office to talk about issues. There, you'd meet types that I would say were a bit suave or equally well educated, but who had been abroad in many cases and had a broader prospect. They saw things from a little different angle. They were very anxious, it seemed, to be friendly with American and British diplomats and others, to show that they were good partners in the Western world. This was quite important to them.

Q: Tom, we've reached the point now where you returned to the United States. What were you doing? You were there from '65 to '69.

DUNNIGAN: Yes. I had gone back on home leave from Bonn in the late summer of '64 and expected to have another two years there. But in May of '65 I got promoted, and shortly thereafter a call came, which I didn't get but which came to our DCM, Martin Hillenbrand, from Joe Palmer, who was then the director general of the Foreign Service. He said, "I want Tom Dunnigan to come back here. We're starting a new program called the Junior Officer Program, and I want him to head it up."

And Hillenbrand said, "Well, you know, he's been back about six, eight months from home leave, in the political section, heading up one of our sections. He's not due to leave."

The long and short of it was, I went. I got my orders and I went. I was not very pleased about it, but went back.

And what was happening was that they were reorganizing the handling of personnel. This was one Mr. Crockett's ideas. All personnel were to be handled in three different units: seniors officers were to be handled by Bill Boswell; middle-grade officers were to be handled by Harry Simms; and I was to handle the junior officers. In those days, that meant officers in Classes Six, Seven, and Eight. There were quite a few hundred of them. And that meant their assignments basically; we were bringing them into the service and so forth. It meant sending them over to the Foreign Service Institute and working very closely with Alex Daven, who was then running the A-100 course.

Q: A-100 being the basic officers' course on entry level.

DUNNIGAN: I had five counselors working with me there. We took all officers and split them up alphabetically. One officer would handle, say, all those A, B, and C last names and so forth. And that worked pretty well. They would interview every officer in depth, particularly the in-coming officers, spend forty-five minutes to an hour with them, finding out what their interests were, their backgrounds, what they thought they might like to do, always cautioning them that, not knowing the Foreign Service, they shouldn't ever look down their nose at doing anything, because they might find it interesting.

So, as a result of that, working with the bureaus of the department who would send us a memorandum telling us which junior officers they needed, we would then work out assignments for these people.

Now the real part of the program began overseas in the first assignment, because we had what was called the rotational system. Every new officer was rotated and was to do no more than the average of six months in one section. We wanted them to get an experience of various disciplines in the Foreign Service. Also, we handled them for three tours, on the Junior Officer Program. They left us after having completed that third tour, or after having been promoted from Six to Five, whichever came first. Now, during those three tours, we tried to work it that an officer had one tour in a developed country, one tour in an undeveloped country, and one tour in the department, to sort of round them out for their mid-career. And it worked pretty well; I would say in seventy, seventy-five percent of the cases, we were successful in doing that, and also in seeing to their rotation, because each post was responsible to us. These people were assigned on our complement; we paid for them. They were not on the post complement, you see, so we could jerk them out of there if the post was maltreating them, which happened in one or two cases. But we would get special reports on these officers, on special forms, how they were doing in their rotation. And most of them did beautifully, very, very well, and we were so pleased with it.

Now this program was killed some years later under Idar Rimestad, because he said the late Senator Ellender from Louisiana had been to Latin America and talked with a couple of junior officers who didn't like the idea, so the program should be killed and they weren't going to give any more funds. So I got a note: "The Junior Officer Program, as you know, is dead. No more rotation."

About that time, I was leaving the program, I just washed my hands of it. I did deal with senior officers the last six months I was there. That had been reorganized.

Q: Well, in this, why did Palmer pick on you?

DUNNIGAN: I'd known Joe in London. And I don't know whether he was buttering me up, but he said, "Tom, I want an officer who will be a good image for our younger officers." Nobody could have made a better image than Joe himself. I said, "Well, that's very nice of you, Joe..." But I was happy where I was.

Q: Well, this is something (I might add that I was in Personnel dealing with mid-career officers at the same time, and so we had dealings) but something, for somebody who has not dealt with the Foreign Service this is sort of parenthetical, that somebody like Harry Simms was at the very acme of his career, and others. So, I mean, Personnel had, and probably still has today, a far greater role than in a normal business. And most of the best officers usually had a stint in Personnel at one time or another. And the Foreign Service can take pride in doing that. For one thing, it helps further your own career. One, to help your next assignment, but also to know how the system works. But whatever it is, the chemistry is there. This is not sort of a bureaucratic sideshow; it's right at the guts of the whole Foreign Service system.

DUNNIGAN: I've felt for many years as you do, Stu. I felt that every officer owed at least one tour to what I call the system. It may not be in Personnel, but in some other part of administration running the system. I think we can give them that. Because if we don't get our good people into it, we have only ourselves to blame for what happens.

Q: Well, now this set-up of this rotational program, I recall it because I dealt with it both in Washington but also overseas when I was in charge of the consular section in Belgrade. And we had people coming through.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, you did, we assigned a number to Belgrade.

Q: Two of them, David Anderson and Tom Niles, became ambassadors later on. But, I mean, it wasn't a fooling around thing. I mean, when you got these people you did feel that there was a central command there. And also, when I came into Personnel, for the only time in my career I felt that there really was sort of an overview of somebody really looking at real personnel development. Were you sort of given a blank slate to figure out the type of junior officer thing, or was that pretty well set up beforehand?

DUNNIGAN: No, we were given a fairly blank slate. No one had done this before, in a way, so we learned by doing.

I think the thing I regret most, and I couldn't do anything about it, was, the last six months I was in charge, we had to send all our young males to Vietnam to work in the COORDS program out there. But that was out of our hands, that came from the White House.

But up till then... And, you know, I've learned of officers even today who I assigned, oh, lo those many years ago, and said, "Well, how was it?" And they say it was good. I bumped into a young lady who I assigned to Sri Lanka back in '66, and I said, "Well, how did you do?"

And she said, "I loved it."

Q: Lange Schmerhorn, by any chance?

DUNNIGAN: Yes, Lange.

Q: Because she served with me in Vietnam, that was a second tour.

DUNNIGAN: Is that right. But she said, "Yes, I liked it."

Q: Could you sort of summarize or discuss a little what sort of people were we getting in? Because this is '65 to '69. This is at the height of student revolt, the Vietnam War was going up. I mean, a lot of things were ticking. What were you seeing in the people who were coming in? Characterize them.

DUNNIGAN: We were getting excellent people of whom anyone could be proud. Their heads were well put on. There were discussions about Vietnam. Not everyone agreed with all our policies, very certainly. Most of them did not want to be in the military, although I don't think that was the reason they had come into the Foreign Service, but the men all went willingly to Vietnam. It wouldn't have been their choice, in most cases.

The only case of a person who gave me any problems was one man, and a woman, of course, who came to me at the end. He'd been assigned to Vietnam, and she somewhere else, and they said, with a funny look on their face, they were going to get married, so he couldn't go to Vietnam. And the long and short of it is, I think they both resigned from the service.

But everyone else went there, and some of them did beautifully. And some of them went on and made very fine careers out of it; some of them became specialists in Southeast Asia.

Q: This was a period, I recall, being a supervising officer later on, which was really, I think, the fun period for most people, because we were having officers who would talk back to you, but intelligently.

DUNNIGAN: Yes.

Q: It was a much more interesting crew than came on later on, I think.

DUNNIGAN: One day, I was sitting in my office and in burst a group of young junior officers, about four or five of them. And they had a great big placard with them. It says: "STARTING BUS DRIVERS ARE PAID $6,900 A YEAR." And they said, "You see, Mr. Dunnigan, you're only paying us $6,500. You know, that's awful."

And I said, "Yes, it's awful. But, gentlemen, if you want to be bus drivers, I think you ought to apply there. You came into this career for something far different from driving a bus. Ten years from now, when you look back, you'll be making three times what any bus driver does who joins the service today. But I wouldn't want to stop you, I mean, if that's your career."

Well, they sort of mumbled, and I never heard any more about that.

Q: Well, I recall, because those bus-driver signs were all on buses that we rode to and from the Foreign Service Institute, and we'd all look and glower.

DUNNIGAN: They had to take one of these out and bring it in to me and say, "Look what you've done to us!"

Q: Well, had you the feeling that because of the campus disputes, that those that really were actively opposed to our involvement in Vietnam, or just sort of anti-government, just weren't showing up in your bailiwick?

DUNNIGAN: They were turned off by government, probably, as much as anything else. They didn't want to be a part of "the system," so they wouldn't apply.

I used to go around and speak to college campuses in those days. My most interesting experience, in some ways, came out at San Diego State.

Q: That was the home of Marcuse and others.

DUNNIGAN: Right, right. It was a hot October day, and I was scheduled to speak one afternoon in the student auditorium. Well, I didn't know, until I got to the campus that morning, that they were having a big SDS rally that day.

Q: That's the Students for a Democratic Society.

DUNNIGAN: Exactly. And there were placards all over, you know, even outside the auditorium where I spoke, "Students for a Democratic Society Rally," and "Throw the Pigs Out," and so forth. So I was in an auditorium, looking up at hundreds of students sort of glowering, it seemed to me, at me. Some interested, but others glowering. And I said, "Well, I thought it was very nice of them to have so many signs of welcome." And they suddenly looked at each other. And I said, "Well, I see these big signs saying `SDS.' I presume that's `Students for the Department of State.'" Well, there was a sudden silence, and then everybody burst out laughing. And, from then on, we got on with my discussion and we got along all right. But, you know, if you took them lightly at times, you could get away with it.

Q: How well did the training work, do you think? I mean, the basic training and all this. I mean, you were looking at getting the feedback.

DUNNIGAN: I think Alex Daven was a good model for me. He ran the program while I was there. Alex was a trained teacher before he'd come in the Foreign Service, a good lecturer. And he told it as it was, not, you know, as the book says. He said, "Now, kids, I'm going to tell you, you're going to find it this way. You're going to find a boss whose

wife you don't like. And you've got to behave this way, and you've got to do this and that. But don't forget that you're going to move on soon, or the boss is going to move, you're not married to them forever." So he was good.

I think, now, the training may be a little more thorough, now that they've set up this consular post over there. I think that's an excellent idea. And they were beginning to work on that about the time I left, saying we've got to do more about that, and why not have some sort of arrangement where they act out some parts? I understand they do it very well down there, and I'm all for that.

Of course, things like political and economic reporting are hard to teach. You can talk to them, you can explain the types of things that are reported, but there are inborn knacks for that, particularly for political reporting, nuances that you absorb as you go along. I think the students in my day were still writing fairly good English. I understand that is occasionally a problem anymore. We didn't have so much of that then, they were quite good at it.

Q: At that time, did you feel that you could sort of pick out who were going to be the leaders?

DUNNIGAN: In some cases. Not in all. Some of those who have gone the farthest were not those I would have picked at the time. Oh, there are a few people who star in any society. One of those who came in, I remember, is Frank Hodsoll, who headed the National Endowment for the Arts after leaving the Foreign Service. Frank was outstanding. He'd been to Yale and been to Cambridge, and done a number of important things--been an officer in the Army or in the Marines or something. You knew Frank was going to rise, and he did rise very well. He was actually so good the White House grabbed him.

Q: Were some assignments weighted, saying, well, this person's obviously going to go somewhere? I mean, these initial assignments. So that those that looked like they were on the star track might be given more challenging assignments?

DUNNIGAN: Oh, yes, absolutely. We looked at the individual up and down. After our counselors had interviewed each one of them, and written them up, I would read all these interviews. And then we would have a day-long session, the six of us sitting around a table. We had the assignments: ARA needs two in Buenos Aires and one in Lima, and EUR needs one in Warsaw and one in Rome, you know. Who would fit? Who's interested in this? We found it was always better to send a person to a place he or she thought they were interested in going. Whether they were or not, didn't matter. And if a person said they wanted to go to Africa and become an Africanist, find a post for them there. Now you couldn't always do that, of course, because the needs of the service, in the final analysis, had to come first. And we told all of them that they would be doing a good stint of consular work, during their rotation, perhaps. That period might extend up to a year.

And it did often. But I said, "Even in the consulate section, we're going to insist you get different experiences--visa and citizenship."

Q: Visas, passports.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, protection work, whatever there is to do. And they accepted that, they liked that. We had very few problems with regard to assignments. One of the few I remember came when... I always went over to meet the class and read off the assignments. And that was quite a banner day for them. And I remember one time the director of FSI, who was then George Allen, was sitting beside me as I read them out. And I read one and I said, "This young man is going to Cairo."

And there was a "Who?" George Allen whispered to me, "You can't do that."

And I said, "Why not?"

He says, "He's Jewish."

I said, "He is? I never knew that." He'd never revealed it to us or never expressed any desire not to go to Egypt.

Well, we later reconsidered and sent him to Athens, I believe, instead. But that was one of the few that ever came apart because of that.

Another one was a young lady who had all the earmarks of success about her. She'd studied Russian, was anxious to go there, in fact spoke Russian and majored in Russian in graduate work. I forget where we assigned her on her first post. We couldn't send her to Moscow on her first tour. Out of maybe five hundred officers we handled, we sent one there at one time, and that was a special need. But we usually assigned them to Eastern Europe somewhere their first tour, or to a post like Berlin or Paris where there could be work connected with Communism. Anyhow, this young lady had gotten her assignment and she came in to see her counselor one day, a woman on the staff, and said, "Oh, I wanted to tell you I'll not be going."

And the counselor looked at her and said, "Oh? Why not?"

"Well," she said, "you know, I only took this assignment on a bet."

And the counselor looked at her.

And she said, "My boyfriend bet me that I couldn't get into the Foreign Service. And I said, `I'll show him.' But now I'm not going; I'm going to go home and marry him."

We'd spent maybe eight or ten thousand dollars preparing her in many ways, and the little things like that were down the tubes. Those are the ones you lose.

Q: Well, Tom, you left there when this program (which, to anybody who was dealing with this as I did, was a very worthy program) unfortunately went down basically because of a political whim.

DUNNIGAN: Unfortunately.

Q: You went to The Hague from '69 to '72. What were you doing there?

DUNNIGAN: I was political counselor there under Ambassador Middendorf, who had just arrived when I arrived, and we had a new DCM, John Bovey, so the three of us were new there. I'd been given Dutch language training prior to when I went, and so I was able to land and get operating right away. And it was a very interesting post.

Q: What were the main issues that you dealt with?

DUNNIGAN: The main issues were in NATO with the Dutch. They were generally with us on most issues. We were trying to sell them a good deal of equipment. And a lot of our time was spent, and the ambassador, too, he was a good salesman, on having...

Q: He'd been secretary of the Navy, hadn't he?

DUNNIGAN: Later. Later, he was secretary of the Navy, after this.

But, for instance, they wanted to buy a new antisubmarine plane. And the French were in there with their model, the Breguet, and we came in with our Orion, as I recall. And we did finally eventually sell it. We also tried to sell the Dutch the F-16s and certain other planes that they were interested in getting.

Now the NATO issues had to do with storage matters. See, I had two tours in Holland and I get a little mixed up. The second tour, we had, in some ways, more important issues.

Q: Well, we'll come back to that in time.

DUNNIGAN: Then, of course, as political counselor, I had the internal political situation there, where we had a change of government from what was basically the Christian Democrats to the Socialists and so forth. So we were working closely with the politicians.

There were a few major issues of difference. We had, of course, tremendous commercial operation there, the Dutch being the world's largest purchasers of American agricultural products in those days.

But that was a relatively serene period, I would say. The Dutch had built-up their military after the invasion of Czechoslovakia. They had put out another armored division, which we were very pleased with.

Q: At that point, the Dutch hadn't developed this almost virulent left-wing group.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, it was just coming. It was coming. It started a couple of years before I got there, and it was becoming ever more noticeable, particularly in Amsterdam. The Provos, as they were first called, were agin everything: agin NATO, agin American involvement in Vietnam, of course. Now this was another big problem for us in those years, Vietnam, because the Dutch were not at all sympathetic to us out there.

Q: How did you deal with them on this?

DUNNIGAN: How will I say we dealt with them? We dealt with them honestly, but with the understanding that we were not going to agree on certain things. We would tell them what we were doing, we would ask them for help in certain things, for instance sending a hospital ship. They would once in a while do that sort of thing for us, but they would always run into flak in the Parliament about getting involved. They had had their troops in Korea, and they weren't going to have them out in Vietnam, you could be sure of that. At that time, too, the Dutch were still angry with us over what they considered our role in forcing them out of Indonesia. They felt we'd put the screws to them and told them they had to get out of there.

Q: So they weren't at all unhappy to see us involved in that area ourselves.

DUNNIGAN: There was a bit of an I-told-you-so about it, yes.

Q: Well, did you find there was a problem...I mean, after all, it's a matter of size and all. The Dutch have never rested well with their eastern neighbor, Germany, anyway, particularly because during the war their occupation was a really nasty, brutal one. So the fact that we depended an awful lot on and had very close relations with Germany, did that reflect on our relations with the Dutch, where they felt that maybe we were too close?

DUNNIGAN: To some extent, and yet the Dutch were smart enough to see that it was necessary. The Dutch have some traits similar to Germans, but they're very different in other ways. Attitudes, for instance. Their background in democracy. Their respect for individual rights is much stronger than it is in Germany. Things like that.

Holland is a small country that doesn't want to be regarded as a small country. They want to play with the big boys. So you'll find that they're always among the first to send a force down to the Gulf now, or stand up. Whenever there's anything going on in the world where other countries are involved, Holland will be there. Most small countries wait until the big boys have done the work and then they'll come in later, but not the Dutch. They

were once a major power back in the 17th century, and they like to recall that. And they are very welcome, too.

Q: I want to move on here; we'll come back to Holland later. You went to Copenhagen from '72 to '75 as the deputy chief of mission under Ambassador Philip Crowe, correct?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I started with a much more colorful man, Fred Russell, who was a political appointee. But we were only together four months, and he departed, never to return. And then there were almost eleven months when we had no ambassador, so I was chargé during that period, and then Phil Crowe was appointed.

But the reason we weren't appointing one, we were mad at the Danes. The Nixon administration was quite upset with them because of their condemnation of our Christmas bombing of Hanoi. They had been very strongly opposed, and the prime minister and others had said things that were repeated in Washington. And so they just let them stew in their juice.

But when we had a NATO ministerial meeting in Copenhagen in June of '73, Secretary Rogers came over. And Walt Stoessel, the assistant secretary for European affairs, was along, and Walt told me that we were going to appoint an ambassador, going to probably appoint Phil Crowe, who was then in Norway, to come down. It would take a little while, and he finally got there in September. But the Danes, the queen even, apparently asked Rogers at that time to please send us another ambassador.

Q: Well, you know, looking at this, although I'm a retired professional Foreign Service officer, it's always struck me that using the appointment or non-appointment or withdrawal of an ambassador when relations are somewhat strained is a peculiar way to do business. And why would the Danes care whether they're dealing with a deputy chief of mission, a chargé, or an ambassador? What difference does it make?

DUNNIGAN: Prestige. They felt always that an ambassador had a higher in, in the State Department, and that's in prestige, too. Now the Swedes didn't have one, either, for a long time. We were also mad at them for the same reason.

Q: Oh, yes. And the Nixon administration liked to show their...

DUNNIGAN: Liked to show that pique--which it is. In some ways, it's like a spat between young children, you know. It has some of that about it. However, I didn't mind being chargé, you know, from my point of view. But, from a higher political point of view, it was not a good idea.

Q: Okay, the prime minister and all made these comments about the Christmas bombing. What did you do about this? I mean, were you given orders to go and tell them how unhappy we were?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I don't think I talked to the prime minister. I mentioned to the Foreign Office, you know, that this was not going down well in Washington and they should know that. Well, they knew it very well, from their reporting from their ambassador there. There was no doubt in their minds about that.

During that period, I kept up my contacts with the Foreign Ministry. Perhaps not as closely as they had been before, but we certainly did all that was required. We had good political counselors and economic counselors. We've always had good relations with Denmark, but I think there was a little less warmth at that moment.

I remember their ambassador in Washington came home in June of '73, and he took me out to dinner and said, "Look, we've got to get an ambassador in here."

And I said, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, you know why there isn't one."

"Well, I know. I keep raising it in the department, but they don't tell me anything."

Q: That was really the sort of major driving thing during that period of time?

DUNNIGAN: That was the major feature. We, of course, were always trying to encourage the Danes to do more in NATO. They do less than any other power, basically, and they are the wealthiest country in NATO Europe per capita. They could do a lot more. Well, it never had, since the days of Hagar the Horrible, a very large military force, or since medieval days, anyhow, so it's not in their tradition. They put up no fight against the Germans, compared to the Dutch. They are a small country that acts like a small country, unlike Holland, a small country that acts like a large one.

Q: Well, you were just mentioning the ambassadors you had. First, Russell, you mentioned he was sort of a character. In what way did you observe this?

DUNNIGAN: He sacked his last DCM. He just didn't like him. The DCM had tried to behave like a normal DCM, I guess, and give him advice on how to do things. Russell felt he was talking down to him--he sacked him. He called Middendorf, my ambassador, and said, "Bill, I need a DCM. Do you have a good man on your staff?"

And Middendorf said, "Well, I've got Tom Dunnigan here. He's going to be leaving this summer. Why don't you try him?"

So, the next thing I know, Russell's on the phone with me and said, "Can you meet me in Brussels next week so we can get acquainted?"

So I hopped on the train and went down to Brussels. He was there for a meeting of our ambassadors in the EC countries. So we met in a hotel for an hour, and he talked for fifty-five minutes, and I talked for five. Mostly I listened for fifty-five minutes.

He was a tall, striking, white-haired, good-looking man, with very intense views. Had quit school at twelve to support his family. Had gone to work during the war in the Douglas Aircraft factory in Los Angeles, was a marvelous tinkerer, working with his hands, and ended up as a vice president of Douglas Aircraft. Then founded his own firms out there. Went into real estate; started to build shopping centers. Made beaucoup money.

Had several chips on his shoulder about the size of small two-by-fours, I think largely because he felt that he didn't have the education these other people did, but, by God, he'd made his own way through hard work. And the only way to treat a competitor, he once told me, was to drive them into the ground, and then you could deal with him. But you had to push him into the ground first. And this was pretty much his way.

Well, he was very kind to me. I had no problems with him, no blowups in our four months together. But I would go home every night to my wife and say, "Just pour one large martini. I got through another day." The whole staff, you know...

His main interest was not in our relations with Denmark, it was in organizing the embassy and making it the most smooth-run organization...

Q: Oh, my God. I mean, particularly a small embassy like that.

DUNNIGAN: He spent hours, and I mean hours, on redesigning the commissary, because he said the shelves were too far apart. And he dragged me down there with the admin. officer and the GSO and the commissary man, and we'd go through that, and he'd say, "Now, look, I built these shopping malls, and I put in grocery stores, and I know if you have a shelf that's eight inches, you can get in so many packed cans. By the way, we have three kinds of coffee. That's wasteful. We'll have one brand only in here. We'll make a lot more." We spent a lot of our time doing that, building a very modern commissary, up to modern American standards à la Russell. Thing like that were most amusing.

He'd bedeviled the military, because we had an APO in our MAAG office.

Q: Army Postal...

DUNNIGAN: Army Postal Office, yes, that we were allowed to use at the embassy, but it was really a part of the Military Assistance Advisory Group, which sat in another building about three miles away. That wasn't good enough, because he had to wait three hours for them to truck the mail to him. He wanted it in the basement of our building. And the MAAG chief said, "Oh, sir, it says it's got to be in a military facility. It can't be in the embassy." Well, the next thing you know, he's calling the four-star general in EUCOM who's in charge of all these, and he said, "I want that thing moved!" Within three weeks, we had the post office in the basement of the embassy. Little things like that got done.

One day, he was going out to meet a very important left-wing Danish politician to talk about Vietnam. This man had issued a blast at us about some atrocity he felt we'd done. We knew he wasn't right, but the ambassador said, "I'm going to straighten him out."

I said, "All right." He had instructions, and I said, "Now, would you like me to go along and take some notes, or Ed Kume, our political officer?"

"No," he said, "I don't need any of you people! I'll do it all."

Well, he came back and slammed the door after a couple of hours. And nothing ever went to Washington. He said that this fellow was a knothead. He couldn't get through to him. He couldn't get through. The guy didn't have anything to say at all, he just kept repeating that one line. And that was all we ever heard about the incident.

He did not believe in political reporting. Once, having told me he didn't want any more reports to go out to the department, he said, "They've got too much paper in Washington now. There's no use sending them anything more." So we had to adopt certain methods to get off telegrams and dispatches.

Q: How would you do it?

DUNNIGAN: They would come to my desk and I would initial them out, and when the come-back copies would come in the morning, we would not screen them through the old man. And he never caught me, and if he did, he never called me on it, because he realized certain things had to be done. You just couldn't shut off reporting.

Anyway, that was a colorful period. Then Crowe came, and he was quite different. He was urbane, sophisticated, a man of the world. This was his fourth embassy. He told me when he got there, "Tommy, my doctor said, because of my bad ticker, I shouldn't work after noon every day, so I don't." So he'd come in about nine and work until noon and disappear. And he led a very active social life. He'd go riding once in a while, but socially. His wife never came.

Russell didn't have a wife. He said, "I made my wife the richest divorcee in California." Not that he lacked friends. Neither of them lacked friends whatsoever.

Crowe would get up for the big things. I mean, we could get him up for those, but he left the running of the embassy pretty much to me. So we got along well. Again, he couldn't have been nicer to me personally. We had no real problems in that regard. He ended up marrying a young Danish lady.

Q: Well, then you moved from this sort of nice European milieu with its problems to really the center of an awful lot of stuff.

DUNNIGAN: Yes. Yes, yes, yes.

Q: How did you get the job, and where'd you go, and what were you doing?

DUNNIGAN: How I got the job...well, the new ambassador was Mac Toon.

Q: We're talking about Tel Aviv.

DUNNIGAN: Tel Aviv. Mac Toon was the new ambassador. I was told this story later, and I have no reason to doubt it, by my predecessor, Nick Veliotes. Nick was due to leave, so the department send out five names, proposed DCMs for the ambassador to look at to see which one he liked. He looked at the five and sent it back and said, "I don't like them, send me some more. Don't like any of those." They sent him five more names, of which mine was the last on the last--the tenth choice. I was the one who had no experience in the Middle East and the other nine apparently had. But I was the only one whom Toon knew, so he said, "I want Dunnigan."

Somebody pointed out, "Well, Ambassador, you haven't had any experience in the Middle East and neither has he."

He said, "That doesn't matter a goddamn. I know what I want."

So I was brought down for a week from Copenhagen, on TDY, to overlap with Nick and also to talk with Toon. Well, we only knew each other casually. I'd met him first in Warsaw, in '47 once, and we'd crossed on a ship when he was going as ambassador to Czechoslovakia in '69. But, you know, it was nothing close, so I was surprised. But it turned out that he didn't want Middle East experts. He said, "They've gotten us into these messes, and we don't need them. We need some fresh looking at this problem."

So that's how I got the job.

I was surprised. I was supposed, I think, to go as consul general of Frankfurt. But that was broken and off I went to Tel Aviv. And I never regretted it. From a work point of view, it was as interesting as any post. It's nonstop there.

Q: What did you do as DCM? Here you were, you had a professional well-skilled ambassador, and you were his DCM. What did you do?

DUNNIGAN: I had two ambassadors. I had Toon for seventeen months, and then he got transferred to Moscow. I was alone for five months there, and then Sam Lewis came the last three or four months.

Oh, there was plenty to do. Of course, you're on the road to Jerusalem a good part of the time, which is where the Foreign Ministry sits. And that's fifty miles up and fifty miles back, up that mountain and down the mountain. So that takes a good deal of your time.

I had good relations there, we all did, with the Foreign Ministry. They were very eager to work well with us. Spent a good deal of time with the Defense Ministry, too, because we have a lot of defense problems with them. And I got to see and know the ministers of both as well.

There was no end of problems--economic frequently. Because even then we were worried, and it seems such small potatoes today, with the amount of the Israeli debt, which was minuscule to what it is, but we were worried about it in those days and we'd keep reminding them of this.

I was there for the last of the Kissinger shuttle missions. And that was a big and exciting time because he was trying at that time to settle the disputes between Syria and Israel. He'd settled the Egyptian-Israeli one; now this was the tough nut. And the Golan Heights was involved, and everything else. And back and forth he would go. Back and forth. But he finally did it. He finally pulled it off. It didn't mean peace, but it meant no shooting. And the armistice lines were observed. And they've been observed to this day in that area. So that was quite a tour de force by Henry.

But I well remember the night he arrived; we were in his motorcade, driving up to the Knesset in Jerusalem and being pelted with rocks. He was very unpopular because the Israelis thought that he was going to give away the store. And they resented it even more because they said, "You're Jewish, you can't do this to us." But Henry said he was the American secretary of state and he had to do what our policy required.

But they had to sneak us in the back door. And, even then, there were people out there pelting our car with rocks. You could hear them; I was afraid one of them was going to break the window, but they never did, they kept bouncing off. That was exciting.

And then I was there first two Vance visits.

Q: This was with the Carter administration.

DUNNIGAN: With the Carter administration. The first visit Vance made overseas was in February of '77. So I was with the Secretary a good part of the time. He had the whole first team along: Hodding Carter, of course, and Phil Habib, and Hal Saunders, and many other well-known names including some of the new Carter team.

I think they left disappointed after the talks. Rabin was prime minister at the time. Alon was the foreign minister. They expected the Israelis to offer them something, on the feeling that we are now the new Democratic administration; we've always been friendly to Israel; what are you going to do for us in the way of peace? And the answer was: Nothing. Because we, of course, wanted them to give land, that land-for-peace slogan that had been talked about back in the ‘50s but didn't seem to mean much. And Rabin was not about to do it.

He was also facing a national election coming up in a couple of months and he had that very much in mind. Because Begin was watching him closely, and if he had been seen to weaken, or to knuckle-under to American pressure, he would have been badly defeated. As it was, he was defeated--to everybody's amazement. I mean, the embassy hadn't predicted it. Not a commentator in Israel had predicted it. None of the embassies that we knew there had predicted it. Nobody saw it coming, but it happened.

Q: Looking at the Kissinger operation and this Vance operation, were they quite different in how they operated?

DUNNIGAN: Well, the Kissinger operation was much more Henry-centered, you know, everything went out from there. Joe Sisco and Roy Atherton were along for that one. Everything went out from there, and people trembled around him. That wasn't true with Vance. There was more of a collegial approach, although you always knew who was in charge. But they weren't afraid to speak up. I don't say they were afraid under Kissinger, but they were cautious, because they could get their heads bitten off. But that didn't happen under Vance. You had the feeling that the underlings had a little more leeway in what they did.

Q: Was the embassy in either of the these playing much of a role other than expediter? I mean, as far as saying, well, we think this will fly and that won't fly?

DUNNIGAN: No, the only one who got close to Kissinger when he was there was Toon, and he stuck with him all the time. Toon has a way of talking to anybody like a Dutch uncle. And he even did it to Henry, although as a careful Dutch uncle. He did get a few points across, I think.

But Toon was not particularly well liked by the Israelis because he told them what he thought of them, and, you know, he wasn't buttering them up all the time. His first speech there was a shocker, because he stood up before the Chamber of Commerce in Tel Aviv and said, "Now you Israelis have got to begin to pay your way. You've leaned on us too much, and we've got too many expenses. We can't be taking care of you all." Well, this had never been said before in public. But that set the tone for his time there.

Q: I've heard from others that any new boy who comes to the American Embassy in Israel, particularly at the upper level as the DCM, is being sized up by the Israelis to find out what his attitude is, whether he's anti-Semitic, and whether he's for them or against them. Was this apparent?

DUNNIGAN: Every day of your life you're there it's apparent. There, a cocktail party is a non-stop dialogue for an American official. He walks in and they'll thrust a glass in his hand, and, from then on, he's in a corner, with fingers poking at him, answering questions: "Why don't you do this? Why did you give this to the Egyptians and not to us? Why doesn't your president...? Why did the secretary say this yesterday?" Small talk does not exist; you get right down to the nitty gritty. And, you know, you hear jokes about "Are

you anti-Semitic?" And then you say, "Yes, aren't you?" Well, that throws them back, you know. But, underneath it all, they're watching. Well, you know, for some years, we never had Jewish people on our staff there. Now during my time we did. And in some cases it was difficult for them because I think they felt under great pressure.

Q: I was wondering, because this is true in other countries where you have people who are coming back because of relationships or religion or something like that. Much more is expected of them rather than being just an American representative.

DUNNIGAN: Exactly. The Israelis expected that these people would be sympathetic with everything they did. And they weren't. They weren't. Some of the finest officers we had were Jewish, who saw the Israeli problem as it was, you know.

Q: How, at that time, did you see the situation in Israel, and American interest in Israel?

DUNNIGAN: I felt we had, and we have today, an interest in helping the Israelis defend themselves. I think we have perhaps overloaded them with hardware at the moment. They are tremendously capable and they have a wonderful military machine. I think we also have been underwriting too much of their economic development that we should never be doing.

I well remember, back in the fall of '76, we reported to Washington that the Israelis were putting two new settlements in the West Bank, where we had told them we didn't want any more settlements, and where they had more or less let us indicate they weren't going to put any more. We said there must be a statement out of Washington that would stop these before they go beyond, because if we let them get away with this, there'll be more. Dead silence for about six weeks. We couldn't get an answer out of Washington. Finally, in mid-December, Bill Scranton, our representative to the UN, made a statement saying that we do not approve of new settlements. But that was all. It wasn't given much publicity. It wasn't as though the president had said something in a news conference, or the secretary had said something, or there had been a wire, or a letter. Not at all. A rather bland statement to that effect. And, as a result, the Israelis said: "Green light." And you see what's happened today.

Q: Did you and maybe other professional Foreign Service officers feel that the Israeli lobby in the United States was jerking us around a lot? I mean, was there resentment of this feeling?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I think we had those symptoms plus an admiration for their skill and ability for doing it. I never met so many senators and congressmen in my life as I did in those years in Israel. They kept coming through week after week. And not only senators and congressmen, but labor delegations, governors, important mayors. The Israelis knew how to handle people and what to show them and so forth. And they got a lot of sympathy and a lot of support from it. There are no holds barred in taking care of influential visitors.

Q: Well, what about reporting of things like, say, what's happening on the West Bank and all? This was before it came really to the top of the agenda. But was there a problem, a feeling about what you could report and what you couldn't report because of what would happen back in Washington?

DUNNIGAN: We at the embassy, you see, didn't do that. That was done by our consul general in Jerusalem. Now the consul general in Jerusalem was never recognized by the Israeli government. In fact, I was called up once by the director general of political affairs, later ambassador here, who complained about our consulate general there, saying, "Some of these Palestinians said, `We don't like that, we think you shouldn't have it here.'"

I said, "That is our policy, you know, we don't recognize your going to Jerusalem. That still remains open and to be settled."

So we agreed to disagree on that, but he made it quite plain to me that he didn't accept our view. I told the consul general. Later, he met this fellow. They are both decent people, but they, again, couldn't agree. We had to make sure that the consul general was uninhibited in making his contacts. And he was. In those days, he pretty much could get around, and people could come in to the consulate general to see him. And many did, from around the West Bank, with various stories--none of them, of course, nearly as bad as they are now--but stories of injustice and discrimination and things of that nature, and Americans of Palestinian descent who were ill-treated.

Q: Would you get these reports from our consul general and then go make a complaint to the Foreign Ministry or something like that from time to time?

DUNNIGAN: Generally, in that case, we'd wait until Washington wanted us to do it. Because it wasn't good for us to say "Our consul general has told us..." Because, technically, you see, the ambassador wasn't to have any say over the consul general. Practically, he did, but in international law, he didn't. And the Israelis were well aware of that, because we kept insisting this was a separate entity that was credited through Jerusalem.

Q: And so you would receive a directive from Washington.

DUNNIGAN: Washington would say, "Now, look, this is going too far. Go in and tell the Foreign Ministry some of their thugs have beat up an American citizen." Then, of course, you could do it.

Q: Was there an inhibition on reporting on affairs in Israel because of the concern about leaks to Congress or to the newspapers once it got back to Washington?

DUNNIGAN: Not that I ever felt or noticed in the embassy. No, I think our people were pretty good that way. We were all aware of the situation, but I don't think that ever inhibited us from doing anything. I don't think of any circumstance where it would have.

Some of the congressional visits get a little dicey at times, you know.

Q: How would they get dicey?

DUNNIGAN: Some of them indicate to the Israelis that our policy is much more in their favor than it really is, you see. And then one had to gently correct the congressman, or get the impression to the Israelis. And then the Israelis would say, "Hah! You people at the embassy, you know, we know what Congress really thinks now, because Senator So and So told us that." And Senator So and So may want this for his newsletter at home, for his purposes, but that isn't US government policy, you know. And little things like that.

I had a very interesting case once. A very distinguished American labor delegation came over, and they came to the embassy for a briefing. I was chargé at the time, and we trotted out all our political, economic, public affairs counselors, our military attaché, and whoever, and briefed them. I sort of kicked it off and summed it up at the end. And one of the labor leaders, a distinguished black gentleman who was well known in American labor circles, since dead, then got up and accused me of being anti-Israel. He said, "All of you, and you particularly, you sound like you're anti-Israel! You're not in favor of these people!"

And I said, "Well, Mr. So and So, we try to call the shots as we see them in the interests of the US government. I don't think any of us are anti-Israel. In fact, I think we're quite friendly to this country. But that doesn't mean we have to agree with everything they do."

He said, "It's plain to me that none of you people like Israel. You don't understand what they've done and what they're doing."

Well, there are some people you're not going to convince. Now he was not Jewish, he was black, but he had been co-opted and felt very strongly that all of us were opposed to the Israelis.

Q: Well, did you find that in a subtle way the Israeli government--the Foreign Ministry but others--would sort of foster this thing about co-opting people but also making them feel that the embassy was the problem, when obviously it was policy and it was not the embassy? Was this being used?

DUNNIGAN: I don't have any direct evidence of that, Stu. I'd be surprised if some of it didn't happen. I'd be surprised if some of it didn't, because the ties are so close between many people in this country and Israel, you know. And communications daily, telephonic, everything, back and forth, visits. I'd be surprised if it didn't.

Q: Often the messenger is the person who gets shot.

DUNNIGAN: Exactly.

Q: Tom, what about the difference that you saw of the operating style between Toon, which you've talked about, and Sam Lewis? Did you have much time with Sam Lewis?

DUNNIGAN: I had about three months with him. Sam had already picked his DCM.

Q: Who was that?

DUNNIGAN: Dick Viets. He brought Dick Viets on. Sam was very much smoother than Toon. Sam was much more attuned to the desires of the Carter administration, how they saw policy. He had come from being assistant secretary for international organization, and so he was very well wired-in, and he knew what would play in Washington and what wouldn't. But he had a nicer way, a smoother way, of approaching the Israeli leaders, so they liked him instinctively. Whereas there's a certain rectitude and Scottish bristliness about Toon that often sets people off on the wrong tangent. But Sam was totally different, and, as a result, they welcomed him warmly, they opened up to him.

He got there, you see, just at the beginning of the Begin administration, so he was moving in, he wasn't with the old team. In fact, he'd wanted to come about a week before the election, but we asked him not to because, we said, "Our posture is so high here (the American) that if you come before, they'll say the US government tried to favor Rabin. You know, they're bringing this man over at the last moment to help him out." And he saw the wisdom of that, and so he came the day after. But, as a result, he was not committed to anything the Rabin government ever did; he worked with Begin all the time.

Then, in the few days I was there with Sam, was the second Vance visit. And I don't think that went much better than the first, although I don't know.

But then Sam's greatest moments, I think, came in the following year during the Camp David bit, when he played quite a key role in getting them together. I had been gone by that time, but I looked back with great interest to what was going on, because that was a tremendous breakthrough.

Q: You were there when Begin was elected, and you say this was a surprise. What was the general judgment of our embassy when Begin came in? What did this mean?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I was the first senior American diplomat to ever have Begin in my house, and this happened months before the election. When we heard he was nominated, I said, "None of us seem to know him, I'm going to ask him out for dinner." He had not gone out to a diplomatic dinner in years, but he accepted. I was then the chargé. And, in fact, I had planned this dinner to say farewell to my German colleague, the DCM of the German Embassy, who was leaving. And when Begin said he'd come, I called him and

said to his secretary, "Look, I want Mr. Begin to know that I'm having a German there, Mr. Helmut Brukweil. I want you to tell him that just in case it means anything." The answer came back: "Mr. Begin would be pleased to come." And I learned it was the first he had talked to a German since 1944.

Q: Good God!

DUNNIGAN: But he came and he was very much a gentleman, a courtly gentleman, kissing hands, very friendly. He and his wife are delightful people, and we liked them. It was a small group of about ten or twelve, and I had a thoroughly good time. And then I'd see him during the course of the election campaign. He stayed pretty close to home; he was already then a little old and infirm. Ezer Weizman was running his campaign, doing a magnificent job. He put him over. But Begin would receive me at the house, and I'd go down and talk to him about an hour and get his views, report them. So we had an in with him before, and then Sam, of course, just kept rolling right along.

I liked Begin personally. I didn't agree with many of his policies.

Q: But did we see trouble with Begin and his party coming in, the Likud?

DUNNIGAN: Not really at the beginning. We didn't see much because they'd never been in power, we didn't know what to expect. We knew that they were composed of very disparate groups, many right-wing, former terrorists. None Socialist, and that was welcome in some ways in the Washington side, you know. You remember that crew. No, we didn't know what to expect for quite a while.

Q: Well, Tom, I know that we're under a time constraint, so I just want to say that we are going to stop here rather than covering your time in The Hague as DCM from '78 to '81.

DUNNIGAN: Which was very interesting, in fact.

Q: And from '83 to '84 in the OAS.

DUNNIGAN: If you ever want ten more minutes, I'll...

Q: Okay, well, come on by sometime and we'll see.

DUNNIGAN: All right, Stu, I'd like to. Those things are a little more clear in my mind, and it would be more interesting.

Q: All right, why don't we hold off until then.

DUNNIGAN: All right, when you have a free afternoon or morning.

Q: This is the second interview to conclude our interview with Tom Dunnigan. Today is December 7, 1990. Tom, I think the last time we had you, from '75 to '77, in Tel Aviv. Was there anything else that you, in retrospect, wanted to talk about in Israel? It's always been one of our major posts as far as our policy concerns there.

DUNNIGAN: Israel is a place you can talk about at great length. The interrelationship we have is such that almost anything that happens in this country is mirrored, and in fact magnified, in Israel. And that has an effect on what anybody can do in the field of diplomacy there. The Israelis are extremely well wired-in in this country. And, in fact, at times one often feels there that the real business is taking place here in Washington, and that the embassy in Tel Aviv is following on policy that is agreed in other places. That may not always be true, but it makes life a little difficult.

It's an exciting post in that there is a frontline feeling always in Israel. Relaxation is not the key to the day there. The Israelis will point out that it's only a few miles from the West Bank to the sea, and they say they live in constant fear of being driven into the sea. But one wonders, given the size and power of their military structure, whether this would be possible. It seems unlikely that they could be conquered militarily, although demographically their position is not strong.

Beyond that, unless there are specific questions...

Q: Well, I tell you, one question that I think that works with everybody who is not Jewish...I assume, from your name of Dunnigan, that you're not Jewish, is that right?

DUNNIGAN: Correct.

Q: And my name is Kennedy, and I actually don't have any Jewish stock in me. When I think about the problems of Israel, again as a professional Foreign Service officer, I find myself continually examining myself to say I hope I'm not being anti-Semitic when I'm thinking about this is a small country, it is driving our foreign policy counter to many of our interests in the world. I mean, this is a great inhibitor. Although I have German blood in me, the German blood doesn't bother me the slightest bit about worrying about am I being anti-German or anti-Japanese when I think about those countries. But when you get to Israel, you all of a sudden find yourself caught in this feeling am I being truly liberal? Am I being truly unanti-Semitic or something? I mean, did you find this a factor in your thinking in how one deals with the problem there?

DUNNIGAN: It's always there, Stu, I think, in anyone who's not Jewish, if you are living in a state that is a proclaimed theocratic Jewish state. And, as you know, for many years it was the unspoken policy of the State Department not to assign Jewish officers to the embassy in Tel Aviv. That was broken shortly before I arrived, and we did have officers of the Jewish faith on the staff. And they behaved like American Foreign Service officers should behave. Although, of course, they may have been closer, in some ways, culturally to some of the people they were dealing with.

Q: Well, did have problems, though, of pressures about people saying, well, what are you doing, you should... I mean, because there is so much of this loyalty. I mean, the feeling of return and all. There must have been more pressure on them. Did they feel it, or did you get emanations?

DUNNIGAN: There was that pressure, and they did feel it. And, in almost all cases, they resisted. Some of the officers who did the most valuable work we had there were officers of the Jewish faith. I don't think we should have our embassy overweighted in that regard. But, you know, when you look at it, the basic language that the Israeli government uses is Hebrew, and that's the language of the press, and that's the language that the people talk on the streets. And we have to have Hebrew language officers. There is an affinity of Jewish people for the Hebrew language, so it's only natural that we would probably have more Hebrew language applicants who are Jewish than who are non-Jewish. In a sense, it limits the posts that one can have, because Hebrew is only useful in Israel. And that, I think, will always give us an influx of officers of the Jewish faith merely because they will learn Hebrew.

Q: We had somewhat the same thing when I was in Athens, with Greek. And there it was a problem, not because we...I mean, there was too close or...coming culturally. And I don't think there was the feeling that you were a frontline state where I think you were more on your guard; I think there was more of an assimilation process and enjoyment. There have been Greek-extract officers who fought it like mad, but there have been others who've become a little bit more Catholic than the Pope in this. This is particularly true, I think, in our military when you have sort of a strong military mission, which caused us some problems, at least when I was there.

DUNNIGAN: That was true in Israel, too. Our military in a sense, although none of them were Jewish that I knew of, became more closely identified with the Israeli cause than the embassy. But that, I think, is congenital.

Q: This has been true in Korea and other places, too. Well, then, Tom, you left Tel Aviv and you went then to The Hague.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, I had one year in between as a diplomat-in-residence.

Q: Where was that?

DUNNIGAN: I was at Center College of Kentucky.

Q: Good heavens!

DUNNIGAN: A fascinating place.

Q: I wonder if you'd give a little feel for what it was like coming from the diplomacy field and all this, and all of a sudden in Center College, Kentucky.

DUNNIGAN: Frankly, about all I knew of Center College before I went there was that they had won a famous football game over Harvard in 1921, when Harvard was one of the top football powers and Center was the Praying Colonels, a very small college in the center of Kentucky. But, when I got there, I found out that Center was a minor powerhouse in its own right in the academic field. It was a small college of about 800 students, which was the second-oldest college in Kentucky, had existed since 1819, had a number of Rhodes Scholars, a vice president, a number of chief justices of the Supreme Court among its graduates, and its entering classes always had the highest SAT scores in the State of Kentucky. It was proud of its academic tradition. It had been affiliated until 1959 with the Presbyterian Church, but then became disestablished. And now has the highest percentage of alumni-giving of any college in the United States. It was fourth or fifth when I was there, but in recent years it's gone up because of the faithfulness of its alumni.

I was treated generously there, was well received; they were delighted to have a representative from the department and somebody who'd served abroad. Not only was I at Center, but I was also allowed and urged to roam freely around the region. So I was at schools in Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee, as well as in Kentucky. And I enjoyed the year tremendously.

Q: Much of the fallout from Vietnam had taken place, but what was the reaction you had as a Foreign Service officer, here in mid-America, the type of questions that were asked of you and interest in American diplomacy and all that?

DUNNIGAN: You mentioned Vietnam, and I was very interested in that problem myself at the time, assuming that I would be bombarded with criticism by students and so forth. Not at all. The students never asked a question about Vietnam; they did not seem concerned.

It was the younger faculty who were hung-up on Vietnam, none of whom had really served in the military, most of whom were getting their graduate degrees during the years of Vietnam. In my view, it was almost a guilty conscience that many of them had. They didn't raise the subject very often, but, when it did come up, you could tell that they were uneasy with their position.

But not the students. The students, frankly, were not overly interested in foreign affairs. I've noticed in recent years writers talking about apathy on campuses, and I think I was beginning to see it then, in '77, '78.

At that time, one of the hot issues was ratification of the Panama Canal Treaty. And there were certain voices in central Kentucky that believed, as, well, Governor Reagan believed at the time, that this was a tragedy and we shouldn't do it. And they spoke in that vein.

We were successful in getting that through, but, deep down inside, there is a suspicion that we were giving away too much.

The other issues at the time, of course, while our relations with the Soviet Union were frozen, there wasn't much new one could say about that. And the people seemed to be well aware of it; the students had all been brought up in the Cold-War atmosphere. I think some of them were restless under it, but they didn't quite know what to do and where one could go from here.

Beyond that, I would say there was as much an interest in Latin America as any other place at the time. Students in Center frequently would travel. They had each year a travel program to the Soviet Union, led by one of the professors there, a bright young Sovietologist. They had trips to France and England. And, in subsequent years, they've had them to the antiquities of Greece, Egypt, and the Holy Land. So, in that regard, they are not sitting on their hands by any means.

The students there generally are later going into law or business, local government, medicine. None of which they'll get at Center, which has only the liberal arts curriculum. They go on then to graduate school. And they become leaders in the state, certainly in the State of Kentucky, and a number of other neighboring states.

So it was a rewarding year.

Q: Then, in 1978, after that year, you went to The Hague, is that right?

DUNNIGAN: For the second time, yes.

Q: And how did you get that job, and what were you doing there?

DUNNIGAN: Well, one day at Center College, I got a call from my personnel guru in the department who said that President Carter had named a new ambassador to The Hague. And this was Gerri Joseph, who had been a Democratic Committeewoman from Minnesota, a newspaperwoman who had been vice chairman of the Humphrey campaign in '68. She wanted to interview some candidates because the DCM was scheduled to leave--would I be interested? And I said, "Yes."

So I went to Washington and was interviewed by Mrs. Joseph. I think there were five or six candidates.

Q: Just to give a little feel for this, how would you characterize it? What type of questions were asked? What did she seem to be interested in?

DUNNIGAN: I was very impressed. I don't know if you've met Ambassador Joseph, but she's an attractive woman, poised, who knows exactly what she wants to get from you but has a very pleasant and nice manner of doing it. For instance, she had a series of

questions she asked, and a pad on which she made notes, and she asked me about my background in the Foreign Service; about what I thought of the Netherlands, having served there before; would I have difficulty working for a woman; what did I think the role of an ambassador was in a country like the Netherlands; how would she relate to the other American entities in-country; and so forth. Those were the sorts of questions that I remember now, and I was surprised--they were good questions, and ones that someone coming in from the outside who's never been in the field should ask. We didn't go deeply into Dutch politics or anything, because I knew she'd be briefed by the desk on all of that. And she had a good deal of reading to do, and she did it all. But I was very impressed. I left there not knowing, of course, what the result would be. She said that she would consider it and I would learn later.

Well, I guess it was within a month, I was called and told that I'd been selected. And I was very pleased with that, and I thought at the time that she'd be interesting to work for. And intelligent woman, with few, if any, hangups.

Q: Just to give an idea to somebody reading this, what would someone, like Ambassador Joseph, without an international-experience background do to get ready? Do you know how she got ready to go to her post?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I know she read as much as she could about the country. And then she went around and interviewed the previous ambassadors and talked to them about some of the problems.

Q: That's very interesting. I mean, so seldom is that done.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, and talked to them and was advised by them. And I think they were flattered by it, you know, that she wanted their advise. But she's that sort of person: intelligent enough to understand what she doesn't know and how to get it. You could only admire that in her.

So she came well prepared, was well received by the Dutch, and her predecessor, Ambassador Bob McCloskey, had been well liked, of course. But she brought something different there, and they weren't quite sure what to make out of her at first because the Dutch are not great on women ambassadors. But she quickly won them over, won a good relationship with the prime minister, with the leader of the opposition, with the trade union leader and businessmen throughout the country. So, as a result, she turned out, in my book, to have been a resounding success.

Q: When you arrived, did you both sit down and say, well, these are the outstanding problems and how do we go about this? Or was it more at that point a maintaining of good relations period? Or did you have some problems?

DUNNIGAN: I had no problems. My predecessor, Elizabeth Brown, was an old friend and she briefed me. And I had about a three-week overlap with her, which was about a

month before Ambassador Joseph arrived, so I had several weeks in charge there before she did. I was familiar with the embassy, having been there before, so we had little difficulty getting started.

I did the normal thing: I told her that she should call on certain people, start with the chief of protocol who'll arrange a call on this and that, that she would be presenting her credentials to the queen at a later date, and so forth. Meanwhile, we arranged calls, and then she would have to go through the rigmarole of calling on all the other ambassadors. She took that with good humor and made friends out of almost all of them. And she assiduously made her calls.

Meanwhile, she was reading the traffic. I screened some of the things and sent her what I thought were the important items to be looked at, and she would go over them. And she took an interest in everything going on in the embassy. Some ambassadors, you know, have only an interest in political or economic or military affairs. Not Ambassador Joseph, she was on top of it all and was helpful to others.

Q: Had she brought management skills with her, did you find?

DUNNIGAN: Oh, yes, she was very good at that. She ran the embassy beautifully, with a light but firm hand. She needed little coaching in that. She had been in public life for many years. She'd served on a commission, something to do with education, I believe, appointed by Lyndon Johnson, you know. So she had been in and out of Washington and she knew how large organizations functioned.

Her staff meetings were well run. The consuls general from Rotterdam and Amsterdam would come, and the head of the Coast Guard contingent in Rotterdam, and others. And she invited the commander of our air base at Soesterberg, which is a fighter base, and had them come once a month to her staff meetings--country-team meetings being held in between times--but they were delighted to come. And so she had a good feeling.

She also got out a lot and spoke, which we urged on her.

Q: Did we have any issues with the Dutch at that time?

DUNNIGAN: We certainly did. The big issue was the GLCMs, the ground-launched cruise missiles, part of the short-range nucleus of what we wanted to put into Holland. There were strong feelings on that. We wanted to put them in both Holland and Belgium. Well, these countries were very skittish. They both had strong antiwar movements, and there were lingering suspicions of the US in Holland as the result of Vietnam, of course, and other things, and also the feeling of Mr. Big pushing Mr. Small around, and the whole thing. So we had to behave carefully on it. But she walked it skillfully through; dealt with the prime minister, Van Agt, closely on it; won his sympathy and his support. And we were very pleased that in December of '79 the Dutch Parliament accepted the

missiles. It was a close vote, but they accepted them. That was one of the biggest things we had going at that time.

Q: Tom, you were saying it was interesting about how Ambassador Joseph got her job. I wonder if you could go into that a little more.

DUNNIGAN: Well, as I understand, as I recall she told me this, after the Carter administration came in, they began to make appointments domestically and to our embassies abroad. And the new vice president, Mr. Mondale, apparently complained gently to the White House (or perhaps not so gently), saying, "Look, it's all very fine, but none of my people are being appointed."

Q: These were obviously mostly from Minnesota.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, and mostly friends of Carter's were being appointed. So he said, "I'd like to appoint some of my friends." And he was told subsequently that he could have two appointments: one to Norway, where his ancestors came from; and one to the Netherlands, because we needed an ambassador there. He picked one for Norway, and then he decided that, well, Gerri Joseph would be a good candidate to go to Holland. Well, she had always worked domestically, and so she was quite surprised when he told her, but the more she heard about it, the more it intrigued her. And that's how she got it; she was one of his two candidates.

And a footnote to that is that when the vice president was coming to Europe on a visit to Norway, and to all of the Scandinavian countries, as I recall, she wrote him and said, "Dear Fritz, you've got to come to the Netherlands. You've sent me here; they're doing a great job; and it'll help us push through the GLCM program, among other things." I didn't see the letter, but I understand it was a letter along those lines.

Well, you know how difficult it is to change presidential or vice presidential travel schedules.

Q: Yes, oh yes.

DUNNIGAN: But her clout with him was such that he told his staff he wanted to go to the Netherlands. And so he spent two days there. It was a triumph for her, because he could relate to the people of the Netherlands. His liberal outlook was such that they admired him from the beginning. He said all the right things, met the right people, and his visit was quite a success.

Q: He came to Naples when I was there. This was after he left office. But a very fast study and very interested in the history. I mean, a very inquiring mind.

DUNNIGAN: As a result, we got a lot of good out of it.

Q: How did she use you as a DCM?

DUNNIGAN: This is a very interesting question. She let me, in a sense, run most branches of the embassy, coordinate them, make sure the reports were out, that we were hitting the high spots, bringing to her the problems that required her attention.

So much of what a DCM does now, it seems to me, is super-administrative work: getting-in required reports each year, how many bodies there are, what the budget is going to be, working with the administrative officer on these things. But also he has to be fully in tune with the political and economic counselors, with what the military is doing. We had always important military problems with the Dutch. She wanted me to stay on top of all those.

And I would sign-out routine telegrams, in fact most telegrams, sending in to her only those that I thought she would certainly want to see. And we almost never had a breakdown in that arrangement. Perhaps I erred in the sense of sending her too much at times, but she was a workaholic and she would take it.

I did not sit-in on all her meetings with staff members. Sometimes I thought it was better if they'd talk to her one-on-one on things. They'd talk to me; they should talk to her. And this happened.

We had occasional personal problems, personnel problems. And she handled those quite well, removing people who had to be removed. Which was hard for her to do because she's very empathetic, but she would understand the necessity of it.

Q: What did you feel at that time about our having a consulate general in Amsterdam and Rotterdam? With all this closing and shutting down, all of a sudden you had these places which seemed to be just a hoot and a holler away. And we had three--The Hague, Amsterdam, and Rotterdam--right in a very small country.

DUNNIGAN: I know.

Q: What was the rationale, and how did you objectively feel about it at that time?

DUNNIGAN: Of course, you can't be in Holland without noticing the things you mentioned. But I would add, also, that all those posts were opened in the 18th century, and there's tradition behind them.

Now Rotterdam, which seemed the most vulnerable because it was less than thirty miles from The Hague, was the largest port in the world. We shipped more grain there and we sold more grain to Holland than any other country in the world. More agricultural produce than into any country except Canada. So it was a tremendous market of ours, and we had great business interests in Holland.

Q: Well, this would also be a tie between Ambassador Joseph, coming from the grain area, there, too.

DUNNIGAN: Not only that, but her husband was a grain trader, you see, with a business in Rotterdam. And she had to be very careful about conflict of interest. She told me that this required some weeks back in Washington to get that straightened out.

But that was one of the reasons we had a post at Rotterdam.

Secondly, we had a large Coast Guard set-up there. The Coast Guard office for northern Europe is in Rotterdam. And there were the usual protection and welfare, visa cases and so forth--the normal consular work.

Amsterdam is different. Amsterdam is the capital city of the Netherlands, although the government sits in The Hague. The queen's palace is in Amsterdam, although she doesn't reside there very often. Amsterdam is a larger city, it's farther from The Hague, it's the scene of the international airport, Schiphol Airport, there.

So, when the time came to close posts (and that, fortunately, was after I left), Rotterdam was closed and Amsterdam was kept open, and all of the consular work in the country was transferred to Amsterdam. I believe The Hague now is a minor consular section, which we did not have before. I'm not sure how it's working; I haven't had enough feedback on that yet. The Rotterdam consular local staff were transferred, I understand, to Amsterdam, while continuing to live in Rotterdam, and this is not really their idea of a...

Q: Probably a transitional phase.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, I think there's a transitional phase till they retire and so forth.

Q: What about Amsterdam? I remember, in the early '80s, the continual series of demonstrations against the United States. I mean, Amsterdam seems to have almost a floating group of antis--our consulate general was almost under siege by many of these people--and a very tolerant attitude towards demonstrations on the part of the Dutch. Was this a problem when you were there?

DUNNIGAN: Always. In my two tours, from '69 to '72, and from '78 to '81, it was a problem. In the early tour, it was a group called the Provos, who were restless young people with painted faces and wild hairdos and...perhaps an anarchist outlook on life would be the way to describe it. And, of course, we were in Vietnam at the time and we were the enemy. We were also siding with the wrong people in the Nigerian conflict with Biafra, in their view. We had nothing to offer them, nothing to teach them. In fact, in their view, it would have been better if we had got out. And they showed that and said it and so forth.

Later, the Provos had disappeared, largely, but they had been succeeded by larger groups--less structured but just as unpleasant and dangerous, in some ways, to our interests.

And I think you put your finger on it, Stu, when you mentioned the word "tolerant." The Dutch are overly tolerant. Anything goes, as we used to say there, and this would infuriate us at times. It was true that our consulate general in Amsterdam was under siege, I believe at least twice, in my time there. So it was difficult. And there were mobs frequently marching by it, denouncing us and threatening us--for imagined slights. If it wasn't a racial slight, it was our behavior in Central America, which was looming larger when I was there the second time, or our association with dictators in other parts of the world, which ostensibly offended the Dutch sensibilities.

Q: When you say the "Dutch sensibilities," was this basically a small segment, or was this a significant segment with an activist tip? Were they reflecting a Dutch spirit towards the United States at that time?

DUNNIGAN: Unfortunately, I think it was a growing spirit. All you'll have to do is watch the several Dutch television channels to notice this, because they're controlled largely by people who think along these lines. And several of the Dutch newspapers are, too. A newspaper that would be considered quite conservative on the Dutch scene would be considered very liberal in this country. It seeped into the body politic, into the social groupings, into the Catholic Church--it's very evident there, they've had real problems. But it's an atmosphere that's grown up in the last thirty years, I would say.

Q: Well, not just the power structure in the Netherlands, but beyond that, in general society, were there reflections of anti-Americanism that you saw there?

DUNNIGAN: During my first tour there, one of our junior political officers went out to meet with a group of students at Leiden University, which is one of the most famous universities there. He said he sat down, they sat around a table, and they said, "What do you want here? We have nothing to do with America and we don't want anything to do with you. We've got nothing to say to you." And that was the attitude of students back in 1970.

I can't say it had improved greatly ten years later. We were listened to, occasionally, politely, and occasionally not so politely.

Of course, you had a generation difference, too, there. Those who remembered World War II, the Marshall Plan, what we'd done for them after the great floods in '53 were very inclined to be pro-American and helpful. But it was the younger generation that was coming on, that is taking over the country, that was raised under different circumstances and has different attitudes.

Q: At the time you were there, was there a feeling that this meant worsening relations with the United States as this generation came up? Or was the feeling, well, at a certain

point these kids are going to grow up and become more conservative? How did you feel about it at that time?

DUNNIGAN: We hoped for the latter, but I don't think any of us were very certain it was going to happen. Not at all certain, in fact. Worrisome times.

It doesn't meant that the Dutch are not going to be allies in certain circumstances. They are. They've always proved to be staunch allies and good fighters. But there will be certain other things about us, socially, that they don't like.

Q: You were talking about the tolerance. I had an interview not too long ago with Ambassador Nicholas Veliotes, who at one time was brought back and was dealing with problems in Personnel. This was in sort of the earlier part of trying to deal with what is now called the gay problem of the homosexuals. This was, I guess, in the early '70s, and we had been refusing to have homosexuals in the Foreign Service. But it looked like there were court decisions that this no longer could be done. So, with the Foreign Service, where do you assign them? And they were talking about having what were known as sort of homosexual posts. I mean, this was in the thinking side, and obviously Amsterdam, Stockholm, Copenhagen were ones of them. But, I mean, this was part of the atmosphere. Did you have problems, not just homosexuals, but bisexuals, whatever you want to talk about it, problems with the staff in this very tolerant atmosphere? I mean, was this people run wild?

DUNNIGAN: No, that was not a problem during my time there. I can't think of any particular cases. We had some alcoholic problems, but those are endemic to posts.

One of the big things that was going on, particularly in my second tour, was the drug problem. And we had a very large DEA contingent there, Amsterdam being one of the centers for it. In my first tour, in '69 to '72, the Dutch told us that was an American problem: any drugs had been introduced by American soldiers from Germany, and the Dutch had no problem. They were a little more honest ten years later, they realized they had a major--and a growing--problem in Amsterdam. And not only in Amsterdam; Rotterdam, The Hague, it was all over, widespread. And, again, the tolerant attitude had led them to allow drugs, just as they allow prostitution, pornography, everything else. Anything will go, because you can't forbid it, is the Dutch attitude. And I'm sure homosexuality is included there, too. That would be tolerated.

Q: Well, what about Americans getting into trouble because of drugs? Was this a major problem for you?

DUNNIGAN: Occasionally it was. Too often soldiers coming over on leave from units in Germany would end up getting in trouble, but the military would take care of them pretty well. I think, yes, there were the usual consular problems. Of course, a lot of people come: "Whoopee! I'm in Amsterdam, I can do anything I want," you know. Well, they can

and they can't--the police aren't always as tolerant as some of society is about things. So, yes, there were cases, but I wouldn't say anything out of the ordinary.

Q: Just one final question on this. Obviously, Germany was our major NATO ally, and the Dutch and the Germans, particularly since World War II, had certainly had their difficulties. Did you have a problem balancing our closeness to the Germans in this growing estrangement, as you were talking about, with the younger generation and others in the Netherlands?

DUNNIGAN: No, we didn't have to, for this reason: economics did it for us. The Dutch saw that their markets are so tied to Germany, which is their largest market, that, while they personally are not fond of Germany for historic reasons, they would have to get along. And they were, after all, getting along very well in the Common Market as they did in NATO. I mentioned earlier that Holland took more grain from us than any country in the world, but most of that, you see, was for transshipment up the Rhine to Germany and Switzerland, mainly to Germany, so it was very important to them to maintain good relations with the Germans. The Dutch guilder is tied to the German mark, which makes it a very hard currency. All of those relationships drive them together, when the chemistry is not always very good between the two and the Dutch would just as soon do without the Germans. But, still, thousands and thousands of Germans pour into Holland each year on vacation to use the beaches, and this tempts the Dutch in another direction. So it's, I would almost say, a necessity-hate relationship.

Q: Well, is there anything else, any other problems or issues that you dealt with?

DUNNIGAN: Let me think...the big ones were always trade issues. We were trying to get more American products there. Mrs. Joseph was very good at that, attending a trade fair; she was familiar with business from knowing her husband's business. We were successful in some ways. The Dutch have tremendous investments in the U.S., as you know. When we were in Holland, they were the second-largest investors, after the British, in the United States. I think now they've been surpassed by the Japanese and perhaps by the Canadians, but they are still fourth or fifth in the world in the amount of money they have in this country, so they have a great interest in what's going on here. And we were continually urging them to buy more of our products. They do buy a lot now, but they could always buy more.

Agriculture seemed to take care of itself. They were a tremendous market for soybeans and grain for us, mainly for transshipment, but the things were processed there in Rotterdam and considered as imports into Holland. Rotterdam is the busiest port in the world, so that meant there were always American and other ships there, including Cuban, and that kept us on the *qui vivre* at times.

We had naval visits frequently, because Holland is a seafaring nation and the big seaports are there.

The Dutch permission to put the GLCMs was very important to us.

Mrs. Joseph arrived just shortly after the fiasco of what was called the neutron bomb.

Q: Yes, could you explain what that was.

DUNNIGAN: Well, the neutron bomb was a form of expended uranium put inside our artillery shell that, when it was exploded in a confined area, was lethal to everything involved. Without damaging much of the surroundings, in a tank or in a house or a building it could kill everything within.

It was considered a very advanced, a very desirable, weapon by our military in the mid-seventies, and our desire was to introduce it into the NATO arsenal. Most of the NATO military people thought it was a good idea.

But, unfortunately, we think it was handled ineptly. Rather than introducing it through the military, President Carter decided that, because it contained a nuclear element, we would have to get the political approval of the governments involved.

Well, I needn't tell you what happened...the opposition party seized on this as the American desire to have them burned alive, cremated, and so forth. And, besides, the Americans were more interested in killing people and saving property. They always thought we were capitalists at heart, and so forth and so on. And, as a result, the Dutch, among other governments, said they wouldn't accept the neutron weapon on their territory.

And this was a lingering problem when Mrs. Joseph went in to begin the talks about ground-launched cruise missiles--only a few months after the decision, by the way. That had taken place before she arrived, but still it was lingering on, it was a problem.

Q: Well, then the election came along, I guess, of 1980.

DUNNIGAN: The election came along in 1980, yes. Mrs. Joseph and I parted company then, in the sense that of course she was a very strong supporter of the Carter-Mondale ticket, and I kept quiet and she knew that I was not for that slate. She was disappointed in the outcome. I had a frank talk with her and told her that she would be expected to submit her resignation. And she wrote out a very gracious resignation letter, sent it in, and came back to Washington in January. The new secretary of state, Secretary Haig, said he'd like to see her. She'd known him when he was in Europe. Well, she went in and had a very nice talk with him, and she told me later that she left there feeling that she might be retained. But 'twas not to be, you know, and she eventually left in early March and was replaced the first of September.

So there was a hiatus there. She, however, comes back frequently to Holland and was there, I know, a few months ago.

Q: When did you leave?

DUNNIGAN: I left at the end of August.

Q: Did you brief the new ambassador? Was there a new ambassador before you left?

DUNNIGAN: Bill Dyess came, I believe it was the 27th of August, and I left the 29th. We had a few hours together, and I gave him the highlights of what I could. We left, of course, some written material for him. The new DCM had just arrived.

Q: They were both professionals.

DUNNIGAN: Both professionals, and I thought it was time to go. I don't think a DCM should stay around very long under those conditions. So Ambassador Dyess and I had one long lunch together, with the new DCM, and I just had a short talk with them. We didn't get into details about anything greatly.

Q: Then you came back and what did you do?

DUNNIGAN: Well, there were no assignments for officers in my category at that time, so I was given various jobs. One of the interesting ones was to work on Iranian claims, American claims against Iran, which was a project in which we were getting material ready for the International Court in The Hague. And that went on for a few months, and then I was brought into another program, a program in the management structure.

Q: Well, you were doing various jobs and then you were brought back to be the DCM in the OAS.

DUNNIGAN: U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States, yes.

Q: That sounds sort of odd, to be deputy chief of mission to something sitting right in Washington, actually.

DUNNIGAN: It is, it's unique. There is no other position like it. The ambassador was Ambassador Middendorf, who had been my chief of mission on my first tour in the Netherlands, '69 to '72. I'd found working with him always interesting, and so when he asked me to come with him, I did.

It was an interesting period there, less than two years, but it was the time when we were deeply, and getting more deeply, involved in El Salvador. Our relations with Nicaragua had soured, and this was reflected in the weekly meetings of the permanent representatives of the OAS, who meet in that beautiful Pan American Building here. We saw the beginning of the process for compromise in El Salvador, which still has not come to fruition, in which the presidents of the Central American countries meet together. We

also saw the beginning of the Contra movement and other interesting relations. It was also the time of the change of government in Argentina, which was very important, when the Alphonsine government took over and introduced democracy again in that country. But there were still dictatorships in, and they were also represented--Chile and Paraguay preeminent among them. Both of them have changed now, but in those days they had not. So relations were somewhat strained with certain members, but very good with others.

Q: I speak as an absolute non-Latin American expert, but I had the feeling that, for some reason, with our Latin American policy under Reagan and all, we got into this thing, particularly in Central America, in a way, way over our heads. We didn't know what we were doing. We felt we could manipulate things there very easily. It seemed to be an inept way of handling it. As a professional Foreign Service officer but also not a Latin American expert, what was your impression of our political masters at that time?

DUNNIGAN: My impression was almost that that you have, Stu. I felt we went too much for the military effort, in fact.

It has always been my view that the only peace that is going to last, in, say, the Central American region, is one that's crafted by the countries involved themselves. If they don't build it and if they don't agree on it, it won't last. Yes, you can set up a structure for a few years under a strong man, but, in the final analysis, if he's seen to be supported only by the United States, you're building on sand.

So I welcomed the efforts of the presidents of the Central American countries to get together, because I think, in the final analysis, that has to be it.

Now, their problems are different. I'm not sure they're ever going to have Jeffersonian democracies in any of those countries. They'll have their own form of democracy, which may be a little more authoritarian than we are used to or would accept. But they come out of a different culture, a different background, and different traditions. It's not for us, really, to try to force our way of government on them.

Q: How did Middendorf feel about this? There seem to be some people who came out of what I'd almost call the rabid ranks of the right of the Republican Party into Latin America. But Middendorf comes out of what, you know, was sort of the old Republican international establishment.

DUNNIGAN: Well, that is partly true, but he also had strong ties to the Republican right, very close ties with many of them, understood them. But he was also shrewd enough to understand that some of the things they stood for probably couldn't happen, that we would eventually have to compromise. But he stood in very closely with the more conservative members around Mr. Reagan, no question about that. Whereas he and I disagreed on certain points, because I just thought some of the things were going a bit too far for...

Q: Well, being right in Washington, this being the apple of the eye in our policy, particularly in Central America, of the Republican right, and all the players being right there, did you find an awful lot of sort of meddling by people on what we were doing in the OAS by political players?

DUNNIGAN: Yes, that happened. I'm thinking of cases of congressional staffers who would come and sit in on OAS meetings, and almost, almost try to direct what the US was going to say and do. They didn't always succeed, but they wanted it known that their president, that their senator or congressman was following this very closely.

Q: Well, the staffers, with this particular movement within Congress and all, were very important, weren't they? I mean, some of them really at least gave the appearance of being in charge.

DUNNIGAN: And they had many axes to grind, believe me. And they were not afraid to grind them. At that time, you see, our policy was dominated by the right wing in that regard. The other voices were few and far between.

Q: Well, what did you do there as DCM? I mean, was this one of these cases of smile and watch this go on?

DUNNIGAN: One survived. But we had a good staff there. And, remember, the OAS is involved in many other things such as health and social problems, agricultural problems. A lot of things that are rather like the underlying part of the iceberg that form the great mass, with meetings going on every day on these various subjects, and members of our staff participating, coming back, you know, and discussing it with me, or I would go with them to the meetings, and writing reports, and trying to get policy written.

You see, we didn't have to send telegrams, in a sense, to get our policy, because we were right there next to ARA where most of the policy was made. Sometimes IO and others, or the E area, economic area, but generally with ARA. So we could get our policy much quicker. In fact, the ambassador and I would attend ARA staff meetings so that we would keep hand-in-glove with them on various things. And this seemed to work pretty well under both Tom Enders and Mr. Motley.

Q: What was the feeling from ARA towards the OAS and our mission there?

DUNNIGAN: I think, if you want to take the bark off, they would be just as happy if OAS disappeared. But it's there, and it's not really under ARA control, you see. The ambassador can have a direct line to the secretary if needed; one doesn't take that very often. But we want to coordinate policy with them, and, since there are men of goodwill in both organizations, it's generally worked. Occasionally, there have been problems when the ARA people want to go one way and the OAS people have to tell them it just isn't going to wash.

Q: Did you have any specific problems that you can think of at that time?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I can't put my finger on a specific problem, but I can say that on some of these Central American issues they would urge us to get the OAS to take a certain stance in support. And we'd say, "We can't do it, the votes are lined up in such a way against us. We can always try, but don't pin your hopes on it, it's not going to work." Things like that would happen.

Q: Was this a time when we weren't paying all our dues?

DUNNIGAN: That is true; that started in my time. Congress began to withhold money from international organizations because it didn't like some of the things they were doing. And, in fact, it was withholding it from the OAS because they weren't backing us firmly enough in Central America. Those of us who worked in the field thought this was reprehensible, that it only bred more ill will, it did no good and weakened the organization in the long run, and it looked chintzy from a US point of view. But Congress did, and has only grudgingly now released some of the funds, I understand.

Q: There has been very slow response to this.

DUNNIGAN: Yes, well, it forced, of course, a large cutdown in the OAS central staff, not all of which was a bad idea, but it should have been brought about others ways than that. We reaped a lot of ill will by it. You see, up till then, we had been beating on the heads of other countries who hadn't paid their dues. There are always certain Latin countries that have been behind, and we have taken a holier-than-thou attitude. Suddenly, the biggest debtor turns out to be the United States.

Q: Well, Tom, and then you retired from that, is that right?

DUNNIGAN: Yes, I retired from that, with fond memories of my life in the Foreign Service and the posts I had.

Q: Well, you had a fine career. I want to thank you very much.

DUNNIGAN: Thank you, Stu.

End of interview